Henry Seidel Canby Reviews William Saroyan's New Book

The Saturday Review of Literature

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"MY NAME IS MILLION"
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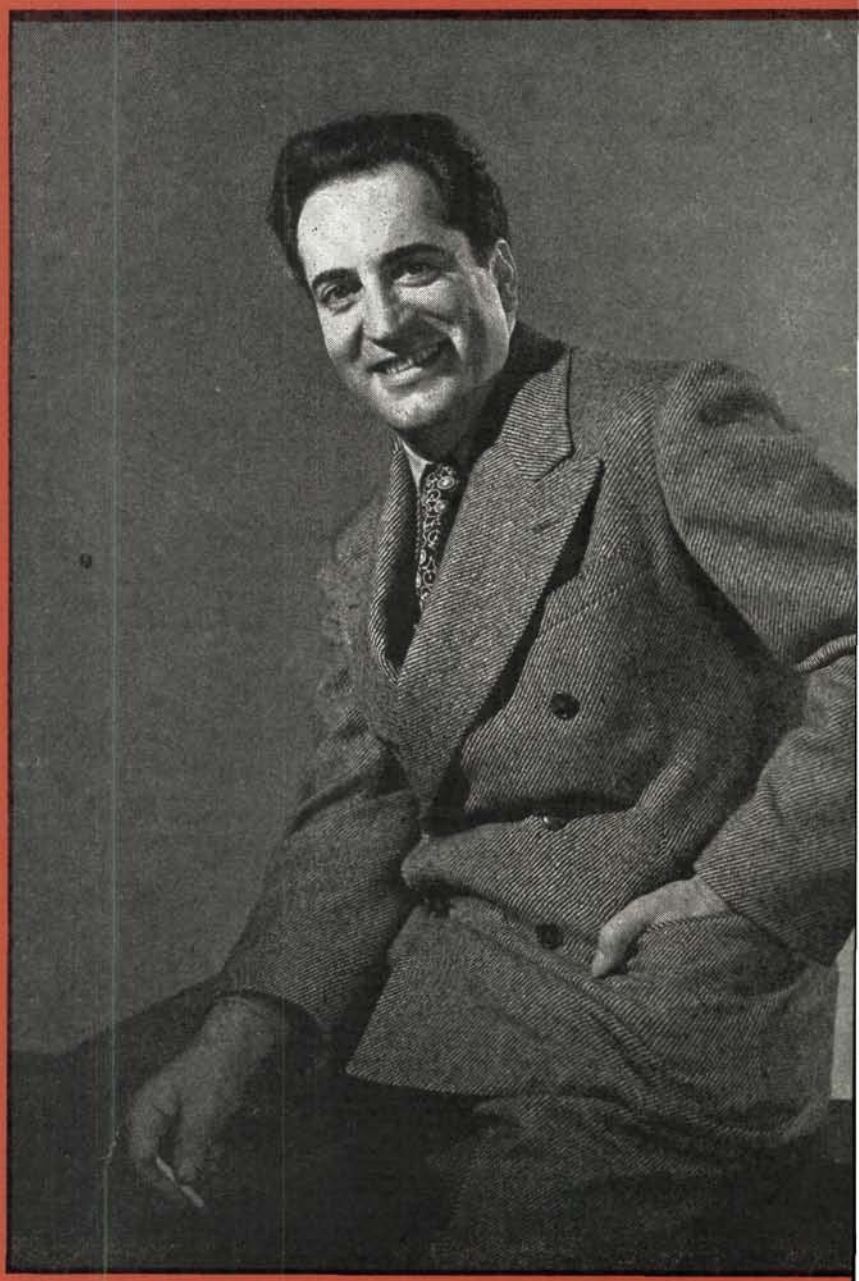

WILLIAM SAROYAN's "My Name Is Aram," belongs on the "same shelf with Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn." *(See page 5)*

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Literature and the South

W. J. CASH

ALWAYS simple in its culture, always inclined to lag, never having had within itself any very fecund principle of intellectual development, the South, until the turn of the last century had, as it were, drawn a ring about itself, as narrowly coincidental as might be with the past. Within that ring it had established a rule which inevitably crushed whatever tendency to internal growth may have appeared. And on that ring it had erected a rampart, topped in effect with a *cheveux de frise* which barred every fructifying notion from without. The result, in a world of poverty and necessary absorption in material problems, was a complete stagnation.

There is one curious and apparently paradoxical fact here which should be considered. It was in this period that the South began at last to have a literature—or at least began to have a number of people who devoted themselves to the writing and publishing of novels, stories and sketches, and poetry.

But the actual amount of paradox involved is very small. Set Sidney Lanier to one side, say of him that, though he was both derivative and didactic, he was probably as authentically a poet as any other American of his time, Walt Whitman alone excepted; and we shall have reduced the paradox almost to the vanishing-point.

We must bear in mind that it was actual for an occasional scion of the old gentlefolk of the South, faced in these lean years with the necessity of earning his own living, and finding in his temperament no taste for politics and action, to turn to writing as the solution of his personal problem. We must remember also that some of these writers had ability, and hence would perhaps have taken to the pen in any case. But when all is said and done, it seems to me that the decisive factor for the almost sudden appearance of this literature was social—that the outburst proceeded fundamentally from, and represented basically the patriotic response of the men of talent to, the absorbing need of the South to defend itself, to shore up its pride at home, and to justify itself before the world.

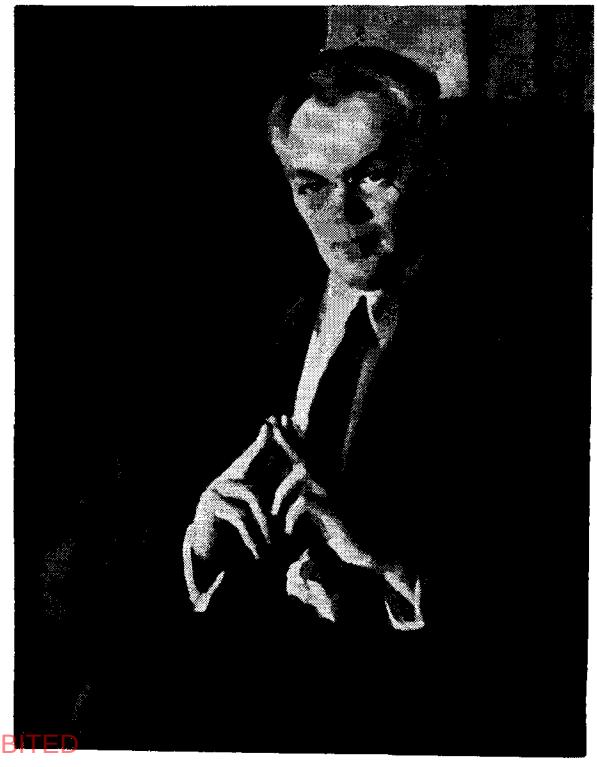
In other words, what we really have in the literature of the Reconstruction era is, in its dominant aspect, a propaganda. Its novels, its sketches and stories, are essentially so many pamphlets, its poems so many handbills, concerned mainly, as is common knowledge, with the Old South, and addressed primarily to the purpose of glorifying that Old South—to the elaboration of the legend, and the conviction of both the people at home and the world outside of the truth of that legend in its fullness. Their tone is definitely polemical and forensic. Often, indeed, their form is simply that of the old rhetoric of stump and platform—the Southern oratory—brought over and set down on paper in all its native turgidity, bombast, and sentimentality; and in most cases the influence is plain.

IS this to say that this literature ought to be dismissed as entirely worthless, as having no significance whatever save as shield and buckler for the embattled South? Not so, of course. If its abrupt rise is not to be laid to any intellectual and artistic ferment, yet, for all that, here was a fateful beginning made. Here was a habit, a tradition, of some kind of writing set up. Here at last was a segment of Southern talent brought conclusively to the use of the pen. And here was example. Here were men—and women—earning a more or less adequate living by the practice of this trade, and, what is more, even winning a certain honorable status through it. True, few of their countrymen ever actually read their productions, and most of their sales and most of their fame were achieved in the North. No matter. In the nature of the case the South was increasingly moved to take a vague pride in them, to yield them the awe with which simple men view the success of incomprehensible powers, to grant them a kind of respect. Here was the channel plainly cut out for all those gifted lads who felt in their souls that they could never be elected Governor, for all those gifted lads who should come hereafter.

Moreover, there was in some of these writings, from the first, a distinct if nearly always secondary measure of literary value in the true sense. Once set at a desk with a quill, talent, in so far as it was really such, inevitably tended to assert its natural right, to bear its possessor, at any moment when he happened to be off his guard, into the detachment which is the prime necessity of the artist, to struggle against the strait-jacket of propagandizing purpose and to break out of it at every opportunity. In the case of Joel Chandler Harris it all but completely breaks clear; the secondary values seize command and become the primary ones. Plainly having in it the will to render the Old South as an idyl, "Uncle Remus" nevertheless succeeds in being a creation, in catching almost without exaggeration and without false feeling a fact and a mood which actually existed. Or, again, Cable's "The Grandissimes," so predominantly a piece of sentimental glorification that it goes mainly unread nowadays, yet had so many flashes of

James Branch Cabell

From the painting by David Silvette.



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untrammeled insight, so many sudden lapses into realism, that his countrymen actually denounced it as a libel. And there are even passages in Thomas Nelson Page, the very forefront of propaganda, in which the advocate is all but submerged in the artist.

Propelled into the practice of letters by sociological forces, never able in these years to escape from the stultification which the dominance of a too great and too immediate patriotic bias involved, the South was yet swinging slowly and always toward a time when it should come to the use of literature more or less purely for itself. And toward the end of the period this tendency would reach definite incarnation in a young woman living at Number 1 Main Street at Richmond in Virginia. By 1900 Ellen Glasgow was beginning decisively to stand apart, to approach the materials of her world almost exclusively from the viewpoint of the artist.

All along from 1900 Ellen Glasgow had of course been exercising her irony on her native land, in a long series of tales which grew constantly more penetrating and impatient of sentimentality. And in 1925 she produced, in "Barren Ground," what I judge to be the first real novel, as opposed to romances, the South had brought forth; certainly the first wholly genuine picture of the people who make up and always have made up the body of the South.

In the same period there was also Cabell, playing Olympian Zeus on Monument Avenue, and in both the Poictesme and Lichfield, Sill, cycles holding up a thinly hidden mirror to his fellow countrymen and their notions.

But if Miss Glasgow and Cabell had been upon the scene all these years, H. L. Mencken indulged in only rhetorical exaggeration when he wrote "The Sahara of the Bozart." At Nashville there were the Fugitive poets, and in New Orleans there was some stirring of literary activity. But save for these exceptions the literary state of the region was to be accurately measured by Thomas Dixon, Jr., whose many rabid novels, and especially "The Clansman," which was made into the moving picture "The Birth of a Nation," probably contributed no little to stirring up racial feeling and to the creation of the Ku Klux Klan.

But the twenties were to see a rapidly accelerating growth, which went along with and in fact constituted a part of the same essential movement toward intellectual freedom which was in evidence in the schools. In Kentucky Elizabeth Maddox Roberts, who properly belongs to the South, produced "The Time of Man." In South Carolina Julia Peterkin and DuBose Heyward appeared. In New York Laurence Stallings, a Georgian, contributed to "What Price Glory?" the saltiness which made it a dramatic success. In Atlanta there was Frances Newman. At Chapel Hill Paul Green wrote "In Abraham's Bosom," and Professor Koch's students turned out their Carolina Playmakers productions in profusion, invented a new American folk drama. And besides these there were many more: Conrad Aiken, Emily Clark, with her sharp-tongued *Reviewer*, Gerald W. Johnson, Roark Bradford, Evelyn Scott, W. E. Woodward, Isa Glenn, Maristan Chapman, Clement Wood, and so on and so on.

Behind them came a swelling troop of younger men and women, eagerly following in their footsteps. The end of the decade saw Thomas Wolfe and William Faulkner tower into view almost simultaneously. The thirties opened with Erskine Caldwell's "Tobacco Road." And thereafter the multiplication of Southern writers would go on at such a pace until in 1939 the South actually produced more books of measurable importance than any other section of the country, until anybody who fired off a gun in the region was practically certain to kill an author.

THE makers of this new literature differed widely in their viewpoints and interests, of course. For instance, Mrs. Peterkin and DuBose Heyward, while exhibiting an enormous freshness in their approach to the Negro—they were the first Southern novelists to deal with him in recognizably human terms instead of those of the old convention—still retained considerable vestiges of sentimentality. Both were prone to see only the poetical or ingratiating aspects of the Negro's lot.

On the other hand, not a few of these writers—perhaps even a majority of those who came up in the twenties—showed a marked tendency to react to a new extreme, and as they sloughed off the old imperative to use their writings as a vehicle for glorifying and defending Dixie, to take more or less actively to hating and denouncing the South. Thomas Wolfe made Eugene Gant openly hate the section. And though Faulkner has denied that he has any interest in anything but the individual, there is in his works a kind of fury of portraiture, a concentration on decadence and social horrors, which is to our purpose here. The case of Caldwell is manifest. And readers of the *American Mercury* in H. L. Mencken's time as editor will recall that baiting the South in its pages was one of the favorite sports of young Southerners

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Armenian Picaresque

MY NAME IS ARAM. By William Saroyan. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1940. 220 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

I INTEND to be enthusiastic about this book, and so I should like to make it clear, first of all, that I am no bought-and-sold admirer of Mr. Saroyan. I didn't much like "The Man on the Flying Trapeze," thought it too clever by half, thought that Mr. Saroyan, on the stage and off it, was one of the characteristic products of Broadway bred to Hollywood out of (often) Chicago—precocious, smart-alecky, over-sophisticated, under-educated—a late Greek, Europeanized-Oriental production, sure to be amusing, and sure to be forgotten. I may have been right, or all wrong. Whatever I thought, "My Name Is Aram" has converted me to a belief in William Saroyan as a contributor to American literature and made me feel that I ought to reassess him from the beginning up.

For the book, in its highly original way, has linked itself to one of the most fertile lines of the American literary tradition; while at the same time adding a new element of the utmost importance for an imaginative study of America as America is. It is an Armenian book, charged with the Christianized orientalism of the Armenians, rich in the highly humorous contrasts of their ideal of living in a California environment, written with the naïve blend of spirituality and realistic cynicism that one finds in Arabic popular literature. And at the same time it is intensely American. It belongs on the same shelf with Aldrich's "Story of a Bad Boy," with "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn" (particularly the latter), and with Tarkington's "Penrod." One could write an essay on changing American *mores* in a small boy's America that has not, after all, so much changed, by comparing, chapter by chapter, "My Name Is Aram" and "Huckleberry Finn." Mark Twain stuffed the prejudices, the folk lore, the freedom, and the ideals of the Mississippi valley into his books; Saroyan has depicted the pioneer generation of the native born of foreign stock, adjusting themselves to America with rude aggressiveness, and complex imaginations and immense energies—youngsters perfectly at home in a California that looks them over with shocked surprise. Both books give us types to think about, and if Saroyan works in shallower soil and keeps nearer the surface, he scarcely is less amusing and often as evocative of a boy's imagination.

The events in this little book are all boys' events: there are fishing parties, and the large adventures of Aram (who knew he could drive a car just by looking at it) with the millionaire Indian, who, being also an imperfectly adjusted American, took his immense pleasure in seeing a small boy have a good time. There is Aram's back-strapping experience when he mixed in an American love affair, his adventures with a country choir, his adventures

Line drawings from the book.

on a first trip to a big city. They are all trivial in themselves, and perfectly delightful. But the solid Armenian life background, with its sets of values and its characters entirely different from what we think of as Californian, are not trivial; and the personality of this Americanizing Armenian who becomes under your eyes, as you read, a new race, puzzling his grandparents even more than his school teachers, is not trivial at all. I prefer the adjectives perceptive, humorous, imaginative, original. I should vote, indeed, for this story of an Armenian boyhood as the most truly American book of the year.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

VERY OLD CHARACTERS

Do you remember these "old-timers" whose personalities have made permanent places for them in literature? Score 5 points if you can remember each one's name, and another 5 if you can recall the work in which he appears. A total of 50 is par, 60 is good, 70 or better is excellent. Answers on page 14.

1. He had a long gray beard, a glittering eye, a skinny hand, and an irresistible yen for autobiography.

2. Having procured some water from the fountain of youth, this elderly doctor gave it to four old friends to drink.

3. He was the oldest and wisest among the beseigers of Troy.

4. This 90-year-old, gray-haired lady demonstrated her patriotism in the face of an invading army.

5. Unusual climate and a calm outlook on life helped this priest to live for 250 years.

6. This feeble old hitch-hiker displayed surprising strength in his leg muscles until he was overcome by his first drink of wine.

7. Eighty-two years old, he was so deaf that the only sound he could hear was the cannon he fired at nine o'clock every night.

8. This Transylvanian count lived for hundreds of years on a daily diet of fresh blood.

9. This African sorceress lived for thousands of years in an extinct volcano.

10. The curse of immortality without immortal youth made these inhabitants of Luggnagg unhappy.

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The Story of Tom Jackson

I RODE WITH STONEWALL. The War Experiences of the Youngest Member of Jackson's Staff. By Henry Kyd Douglas. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1940. 401 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

THIS is a book of rare quality. Its primary distinction lies in the intimacy, frankness, and discernment with which it treats Stonewall Jackson, substituting a series of graphic undress photographs for the usual portrait in oils. The great commander had become conventionalized. Everybody has thought of him as a grim Covenanter type, harsh with his subordinates, unrelenting in pursuit of duty, tight-lipped and rather intolerant, but pure of soul and gifted with a genius for war. This author, who knew Jackson from Bull Run to the tragic end at Appomattox, makes him human, likable, and understandable. What impressed young Douglas, riding, eating, sleeping, and fighting at Jackson's side, was not any erratic and abnormal traits—for he had none. It was first of all his intellectual power; next, the elevation and nobility of this quiet Christian gentleman; and finally, his general normality of temperament and tastes. He was sensible, liberal, kindly, and quick-witted. He was habitually stern only with himself, though his rigorous sense of public duty made him a strict disciplinarian. Never dogmatic or intolerant, he could relax most genially. His military feats were the result not of inspiration, but of prolonged meditation and forethought, and his "craziest" acts always turned out to have a wondrous sagacity behind them.

All this Henry Kyd Douglas, the young lawyer who impetuously left St. Louis in 1861 to fight for his native Virginia, not only says but illustrates in the best Boswellian style. His book is the fullest collection of anecdotes about Jackson and utterances by him that we possess. We see the general, in the exultation of victory after Front Royal, crying out to his men: "Very good! Now let's holler!" We see him taking a glass of sweetened whiskey-and-water, and confessing to D. H. Hill that "I am the fondest man of liquor in this army"—though he added that he almost never tasted drink. We see him climbing a persimmon-tree, and needing assistance to get down. We see him in one interval of leisure asking for a book, and when he got a sensational yellow-back novel (the only volume in camp) bravely ploughing through it to the end. We see him

From an old print.
Stonewall Jackson

asleep on his horse, still plodding forward, as he and his army continue their forced march far into the night. We see him at table, selecting one or two dishes for his meal, and eating of them abundantly—sometimes berries, milk, and bread. We get glimpses of his unostentatious piety.

It is these humanizing touches which impart to the book its special value. Douglas tells us a good deal about Jackson's relations with other commanders—Ashby, A. P. Hill. Longstreet, Stuart, and of course Lee; but other writers can do this. He describes the great battles; but Gordon, Alexander, and the other Confederate memoirists have done the same. Where he is unique is in showing Jackson out blackberrying, and beating a hasty retreat as the balls fall thickly, with the remark that he has always had a nervous dread of being wounded in the back; Jackson sucking a lemon as he watches the fighting at Cold Harbor; Jackson rebuked by an old farmer for leading his men across a plowed field, and taking the reprimand meekly; and Jackson in a Richmond church beset by admiring ladies. We learn how he dressed, slept, and walked; we are told that he rarely spoke of war to his staff, for he disliked talking shop.

When Jackson departs the scene—Douglas attended his funeral in Richmond, of which he gives a feeling description—the book declines in interest and value. Yet it contains a stirring account of Gettysburg, where the author was wounded in charging Culp's Hill, and some interesting pages on prison life at Johnson's Island in Lake Erie. Douglas was exchanged in time to fight with Early, and to be present at Appomattox. Immediately after the war, in 1866, he wrote his book, and then more than thirty years later rewrote it to soften its sectional acerbity. It is a remarkable bit of fortune which, after all these years, gives us such fresh and illuminating recollections of one of the greatest of American military leaders, and one of the most arresting of American personalities. We could better spare some heavy shelves of formal history than this.

From Lincoln to FDR

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS FROM ABRAHAM LINCOLN TO FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT. By Cortez A. M. Ewing. Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press. 1940. 218 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN K. M. TIBBY

IF you are one of those persons who wish your college history textbooks had given you a little sharper picture of American voting history—in addition to the customary social and economic interpretations—you will find the picture in Mr. Ewing's new study.

Basing his distinctions primarily on the division of the Republican and Democratic vote, Mr. Ewing finds four major voting periods: (1) the reconstruction era from 1864 to 1876, when the Republicans won every Presidential test by substantial margins and when the Democrats (in 1872) once failed to nominate a Presidential candidate altogether; (2) the "fifty-fifty" period from 1880 to 1892, when the Democrats fought back to something like equal party stature under Cleveland and Hancock; (3) the period of "rampant Republicanism" from 1896 to 1916, and (4) the period of landslide elections from 1920 to 1936. One of the most interesting sections of Mr. Ewing's book is his analysis of the voting characteristics of various sections of the country, which leaves the reader with the inescapable conclusion that sectional differences have been far more pronounced in American elections than is casually realized.

There is an appreciative study of the role of minor parties in American election history, and Mr. Ewing finds the chief function of these parties in testing the political market for ideas—generally progressive in tone—which major parties hesitate to approach.

Interesting charts and salty interpretation make Mr. Ewing's book more than a dry rehash of old political box scores and election headlines.

John K. M. Tibby is on the staff of the American Institute of Public Opinion.

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Will Appeasement Work for Us?

A REVIEW BY ELMER DAVIS

THE ECONOMICS OF FORCE. By Frank Munk. New York: George W. Stewart. 1940. 254 *pp.* $2.

HERE is a book that all of our big-business appeasers ought to be compelled to read before they open their mouths again. For it seems probable that most of these gentry are merely stupid (though unfortunately not dumb); that they would not consciously and deliberately further their personal profit at the expense of the security of the nation —not, at any rate, if they could be made to realize that even their personal profit would not be served for long, that their thirty pieces of silver would be paid in blocked marks.

Dr. Munk, an exiled Czech economist now teaching at Reed College in Oregon, has seen the Nazi economic system in operation on its home grounds, and has also watched its systematic looting of his own country. He is a somewhat better authority on Nazi economics than those American business men who know nothing about it except that it promises them big profits as soon as England has been knocked out; and to the study of American economy he brings a fresh perception which often picks out points that have escaped the notice of the native. These two systems are (as Hitler candidly reminded us in his speech of December 10th) two opposing worlds, one or the other of which must break in pieces. Ours is the "economy of welfare" aiming at the creation of a higher standard of living (or, as Hitler prefers to put it, at the satisfaction of the egoism of the individual); and Dr. Munk reminds us that it has been pretty successful in accomplishing its purpose. But though capitalism has greatly increased the standard of living

> one thing has increased even more rapidly—the expectation of an even higher standard of living. . . . Physical suffering and starvation during the recent economic crisis have probably been smaller than in past crises; on the other hand, psychological suffering has increased. . . . The real problem of the present epoch is not economic but psychological. Great masses of the population have discounted the promises of a rising standard of living, and become immediately disillusioned when the promises fail to materialize.

Accordingly they become easy victims for a fresh set of promises, which also fail to materialize; but by that time there is a Gestapo to discourage manifestations of disillusionment.

For an economic system subject to governmental control is a means, not an end; "socialism is merely a tool, a mode of procedure; it can be given any meaning, and can be turned to any use decided upon by the government of the moment." The communist (the real communist at least, if perhaps not Mr. Stalin) thinks like the conservative capitalist in economic terms; but "the economics of force is based upon a new type of man, a man who places economic well being far below other values—namely, power, prestige, domination." German agents talk to American business men in the lanugage American business men understand, but "the totalitarian powers are not interested in economic advantages as such. They are interested in economic advantages only as they can be made subservient to their political, and in the last analysis, military objectives."

What the Nazis have done to German economy has often been told, but seldom so lucidly as you will find it set down here. Communism, observes Dr. Munk, was founded by Marx in the days when ownership was still the same thing as control, and thanks to a mental lag has established government control of the national economy by "the rude and primitive method of expropriating property. Fascism has taken a lesson from the modern corporation. It has found out that it is unnecessary to take away the fiction of ownership if you can get hold of the actual control." Thus the property owner who may still think of himself as a capitalist becomes actually "a non-salaried servant of the state." If our big-business appeasers want to know how that feels, let them hunt up Mr. Fritz Thyssen in his exile, and ask him.

Dr. Frank Munn gives American business something to think about.

And not merely big business, but little business which furnished so much of Hitler's popular support. Consumption is rationed in Nazi Germany not merely as a temporary military necessity, but because "a contented, well-fed, well-housed and well-amused population would be unwilling to fight wars of aggression. . . . It must be the aim of every totalitarian state to feed the population well enough to keep up its fighting and working strength, but not well enough to make it happy and complacent." And, with rationed consumption, "trade has lost most of its functions; all it does is to put over the counter the merchandise that the government has thought fit to sell, and collect the money for that same government."

To which our appeasers may (and indeed do) reply: what of it? What do we care what happened in Germany? It can't happen here. We can do a good business with Germany direct as soon as the British come to their senses and make peace; and in South America we can divide things up with the Germans; there is business enough for all. . . . Well, we know how the Germans have done business in the Balkans and were beginning to do it in South America—business directed to other than economic ends. It used to be the rule, Dr. Munk observes, that trade follows the flag; "under the economy of force the flag follows trade, or rather the trade is only the pretext that justifies the raising of the flag of revolution." See the recent history of any small nation in eastern Europe: "when these countries realized that it was not possible to make a distinction between economic and political relations in dealing with the system of force, it was too late. Germany had acquired an economic monopoly, which was soon to become a political monopoly as well." And if the totalitarians win, "South America is destined to become the Balkans of the western hemisphere." Economic pressure will

(*Continued on page* 16)

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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BOOKS AND THE MAILS

THE United States Post-Office is a principal in the following two cases, either or both of which may be of interest and possibly concern to the world of books:

Case No. 1. A book discussed on this page last week, "Speak Up for Democracy," by Edward L. Bernays, has been rejected for inclusion at the usual book rates by the New York postal authorities. No reason was given at first for the rejection, but later an official ruled that the book contained "advertising matter." Protests by the publisher brought the further official explanation that a bibliography included in the book was responsible for the "interpretation" resulting in the rejection. It seems that Mr. Bernays had gone to the trouble of listing the name of the publisher and the price alongside each book recommended for supplementary reading; this, according to the interpretation, constituted "advertising matter" since it told people where they could get a book and for how much.

It is difficult to determine from the wording of the interpretation whether it is the combination of both source and cost which is responsible for the ruling, or whether either one is sufficient to warrant the label of "advertising matter." If bibliographies with sources are not permissible, then many if not most books containing bibliographies have already escaped the restriction. One of the longest bibliographies of the year, for example, is to be found in Mortimer Adler's "How to Read a Book," in which several hundred books are listed with names of publishers. Yet inquiry reveals that the book was accepted for mailing at the usual rates. And even where prices are given in addition to sources, we can point to at least one book which is guilty on both counts without any postal penalty. This volume happens to be devoted entirely to lists of books, with publisher and price specified throughout. We are withholding the title of this book at the suggestion of the publisher, whose reluctance to call attention to the fact is understandable.

Publishers of Mr. Bernays's book are proceeding with the appeal. In addition, the American Library Association is seeking a uniform ruling concerning bibliographies, since cases have come to its attention in which various post-offices in different sections of the country have given conflicting rulings on the same book.

Case No. 2. Each week thousands of copies of *Facts in Review,* an out-and-out propagandist organ distributed by the German Library of Information, are sent out all over the country—to editors, clergymen, teachers, students, business men, group leaders, etc. They are sent through the mails at a preferred rate under a special classification, in this case entitling the German Library of Information to savings in postage amounting usually to 300 per cent or more from first-class postage requirements.

Without getting into a detailed technical discussion of the differences between first-class mail and the other categories, it can be said that publishers or distributors of newspapers, magazines, books, or other printed matter may mail under second, third, or fourth-class postal classifications, depending upon the nature of the mailing piece, quantity, weight, etc. First-class mail, consisting of letters and other sealed matter, requires the full rate of three cents for each ounce going outside of local delivery. The second, third, and fourth-class categories, generally consisting of identical pieces mailed in bulk, offer sharp reductions in postage from the first-class rate. *Facts in Review,* for example, is sent out under a postal permit (No. 13921) entitling it to the eight-cents-per-pound rate, which in this case, comes to one-cent postage per copy.

Outside of the first-class category, the postal services of the United States operate at a loss. Last year, for example, the Postmaster General stated in his annual report that although his department could show a profit of $128,291,223 for first-class mail, all other operations combined to make a net loss of $40,828,094. According to a postal authority, the United States has always shown a deficit for the non-first-class categories. In each case, the deficit has come out of public taxation. As the Postmaster General has pointed out, the public mails are a public service and are supported through subsidy by the people.

This raises an interesting question: since thousands of copies of Germany's *Facts in Review* are admittedly carried through the mails at a loss, is it possible that the anti-democratic propagandist activities by mail of a foreign power have become an American public service? As a not unimportant footnote, it might be added that *Facts in Review* not only reflects but presents a point of view which, if not the cause for all our feverish activity in national defense, is certainly something more than a minor factor. It is given over each week to the glories of Mr. Hitler's administration, to the invincibility of the Nazi army in particular and the Nazi doctrine in general, to the folly and wickedness of Great Britain, and to the unpleasant consequences awaiting those who would become her allies. If one is to believe *Facts in Review,* all is serene and noble in National Socialism.

The issue here is not whether the mails should be open to foreign propaganda—although there are arguments even against that—but whether foreign propaganda should not at least be required to be sent under a classification which insures it will not be carried at a loss.

Facts in Review is cleverly gotten up; it is clever in its approach, its content, its format. Most clever of all, from its own point of view, is that *Facts in Review,* in part at least, is subsidized by Americans themselves.

IT IS absurd, of course, to conclude from the juxtaposition of these two cases that the United States Post-Office is deliberately hampering or helping propagandist activities from one direction or the other. But these cases, though unrelated, do help by curious contrast to highlight what are possibly weaknesses in our postal rulings or in the powers of interpretation given to postal authorities. It is presumptuous of *The Saturday Review* to suggest ways in which these weaknesses might be corrected, but the American Library Association, which has made a special study of the subject, suggests that uniform rulings be adopted in order to provide newspaper, magazine, and book publishers and distributors with precise information concerning just what is mailable and under which classifications.

As for *Facts in Review,* the editors by no means wish to suggest that the "interpretative" censorship powers of the post-office, already very large, be further broadened. Any prohibitions concerning foreign propaganda in the mails will have to be defined and prescribed by law. What is needed, apparently, is a delimitation of the area of interpretation plus a bill of particulars, whether applied to the mailing of books on democracy or pamphlets on nazism. N. C.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Down with Debunkers

SIR:—I cannot refrain from thanking you and Mr. Louis J. Halle, Jr., for the article "Nihilism, Literature and Democracy," [*SRL*, Dec. 14]. May the protests against the debunkers increase!

HAL H. SMITH.

Detroit, Mich.

SIR:—I want to congratulate you and all fellow-readers on "Nihilism, Literature and Democracy."

Mr. Halle has expressed himself very well and I cannot possibly improve on his statement but may this or something like it be said again and again until we all get our criteria of values straight and come to realize that cynicism can be as false and stupid as sentimentalism and perhaps even more destructive.

ALLEN G. BRAILEY.

Boston, Mass.

Hold, Enough!

SIR:—You ask how many agree with Mr. Eshleman regarding continuance the "What's Wrong" series. I would say: Don't! It seems to me that the bellicose situation throughout the world has tainted the book-business and it's time to call a halt. Anyway there would be little point, I think, in printing what's wrong with book-buyers. The main difficulty is lack of money. And as for booksellers, we know pretty well what's wrong with ourselves. It is principally that we are not good business-men. If we were we would be in some other business.

WILLIAM R. BARNES.

New York, N. Y.

SIR:—I second Mr. Eshleman's suggestion that you give us more "What's Wrong" articles. Raymond T. Bond's is a daisy.

N. L. DODGE.

Boston, Mass.

SIR:—I view with alarm the seething controversy taking place on your pages among writers, publishers, and critics.

It seems to me that the fundamental difference between authors and publishers is that the author "thinks" emotionally, while the publisher thinks intelligently. Critics, of course, think both intelligently and emotionally.

Suppose, however, with the turmoil and agitation engendered in your forum, that the present complacent scheme should be overturned? Think of the chaos if writers suddenly became intelligent; publishers, emotional; critics, neither?

METTEAU (I'm armed) MILES.

Coconut Grove, Florida.

"Water Babies, Etc."

SIR:—Having spent several years selling children's books, the article by Basil Davenport, "Water Babies—With Plain Water," [*SRL*, Nov. 16] got me into such a state of indignant fury I am herewith boiling over.

Mr. Davenport can't really have studied the children's book market, or he couldn't possibly have said, "a stroll through the children's department of a large book store leaves one with the composite impression that all the books are about 'How the Little Locomotive Learned to Eat His Spinach.' There are, of course, books for the very young about locomotives, written with lots of humor and with grand illustrations by some of our very best artists; perhaps Mr. Davenport has no sense of humor, or perhaps he doesn't know yet that there is a great difference in books designed for very little children—the three-to-six-year-olds—and those for, say, the ten-to-twelves, and the fourteen-to-sixteens.

Mr. Davenport deplores the lack of fairy tales. In the three well-stocked children's books departments in which I have worked, there have been complete sections given over to fairy tales from all nations. New collections are to be found in every spring and fall crop of publications. As for original fairy tales, I'd like to suggest that Mr. Davenport widen his Water Babies horizon with "Mary Poppins," "Dr. Doolittle and the Hobbit," to name just a few of the most outstanding in the last few years.

In regard to Mr. Davenport's theme song that modern children prefer comics to books, it has been my experience that children take their comics on the hoof, leafing through them at the magazine stands in friendly neighborhood drug stores. The only children who have not a sense of perspective in regard to comic magazines are those children who have not been given the right kind of books.

Also, the days when Beatrix Potter could write, "the lettuces were very soporific" are still here; no real children's book shop could even pretend to keep house without a complete stock of the Beatrix Potter books. And no real children's book shop could pretend to keep house without the books by Jane Austen, Dickens, Marryat, and Dumas that boys and girls from twelve up *still* enjoy reading. There is even an edition of Gargantua and Pantagruel by Rabelais for young people—edited, of course, but surely even Mr. Davenport would want it so.

As for education, there are books on every subject imaginable for children of all ages, of varying degrees of complexity. History, biography, biology, zoölogy, astronomy, music, botany, ornithology, geology, chemistry, physics, all are covered. Some may be presented in form as fascinating as a story, with humor and a spirit of fun, but the good ones are definitely *not* written down to children. I would like to suggest for Mr. Davenport's perusal the "Sam" books by Maxwell Reed. Starting with "The Earth for Sam," designed for the younger children of nine-to-twelve, they progress through the "Stars for Sam," "The Sea for Sam," to "Animals on the March," the story of evolution for young people. From these Mr. Davenport might go to Baker's Constellations. And I'd like to remind him that Van Loon's "Story of Mankind" is a staple item in children's books.

DOROTHY WILCOX.

Berkeley, California.

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No. 1 Residence

THE WHITE HOUSE. A Biography. By Charles Hurd. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1940. 331 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by E. K. P. STOKES

WASHINGTON is still a town. And a delightful one. A town with its green and on that green the center of interest *The* White House. Mr. Hurd knows a great deal about it as anyone might who went there day after day on professional business. Not many years ago a representative of the *New York Times* in Mr. Hurd's position could smell the coffee brewing for the presidential dinner but improvements of this historical building have added to its efficiency and removed some of the feeling of intrusion thrust upon official visitors of the past.

This entertaining book covers the high points of presidential history from John and Abigail Adams when they arrived in their muddy coach from Philadelphia to inaugurate Washington as the new seat of government, to Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt and their conception of political life in Washington, with glimpses of the important trends in the government of the United States as policies followed presidents.

The story moves in clear sequence and with such simple telling that one begins to wish "The White House" would tell more and fill out the pictures sketched in their main features. Presidential politics is a promising subject. Too often has the White House story been written with lighter emphasis—Mrs. Harding's waffles, the tea cup that went astray in this and that administration. Now stands this staunch and beautiful family home rich with the tradition of all that it has taken to produce the political presidential family of 1940. The progression of the occupants from crudities to elegance and return is an interesting background for the change in party and personal points of view of the incumbents. Then another side—the relations of the White House and the foreign representatives who in times of crisis have stood high hat and cane in hand waiting to be ushered in for conferences affecting world affairs. "The White House" has spoken in many languages translated to the ends of the earth.

Mr. Hurd's book is a lusty story of men and women affected deeply by the responsibilities of their incumbency. From first to last there would seem to have been one long effort on the part of presidents to appear as democratic as a child of nature while maintaining the dignity, material comforts, and embellishments that American progress deserved. It was an odd combination that made Calvin Coolidge parsimonious of the monthly food bills and free with the presidential yacht; Abigail Adams turn up her nose at the lack of genteel equipment for a family lately from Massachusetts; Thomas Jefferson anxious to be friendly and homey in his bathrobe while his personal preferences were for European culture and fittings for his daily life. The history of the White House plumbing begins with open wood troughs bringing water to the mansion in the times of Adams and Jefferson and proceeds to the tearing out of this and that discarded piping to satisfy the demands of what was considered only the decencies and necessities of the times. In the archives of the Congress today must be a sizeable record of appropriations made for "doing over," "making safe," "improving," and bringing up to date this building which has retained by some miraculous chance inside and outside its architectural tradition while meeting the needs of the growth of the business of presidents. In revamping to come, some day its corner stone laid by George Washington and hovered over by Thomas Jefferson may be uncovered but not even with the burning of the building by the British has this yet been revealed.

For the thousands of sightseers and visitors who file through what was originally known as the "palace" of the presidents, and for others, Mr. Hurd has recorded matters of interest and importance in White House history hitherto neglected. The White House, writes Mr. Hurd, "was based on the conception of a country fairly well united into a single Federalist party, with the President occupying a paternalistic position well above political considerations."

Elizabeth King Phelps Stokes was a Washington correspondent of the old New York Evening Post.

Author, Author!

Fame is the spur: *Robert Nathan* has created many characters in his novels, but, none, apparently, more famous than the hero of "Journey of Tapiola" published two years ago. Tapiola, readers will remember, is an actual dog, a Yorkshire terrier of blue blood and slightly inebriated appearance. His real name is Haringay Promise. Recently he went shopping with his owner, Blanche W. Knopf. While they were in a Fifth Avenue store—they were buying him some snow boots—a strange lady spoke to them. "Excuse me, but isn't this Tapiola?" Astonished, Mrs. Knopf replied that it was, indeed, Tapiola; but how did the lady know his name? "Oh, that was easy," the lady said, "I read Mr. Nathan's story about him when it came out and I couldn't fail to recognize him at once."

In Brief: *P. G. Wodehouse* is confined in an internment camp in Silesia, his American publishers have heard through his daughter. The humorist was captured by the Nazis when they entered Le Touquet last June. On a recent broadcast from London, Larry Leseur reported news that Mr. Wodehouse is very happy in his internment and has written 20,000 words of a new book. His American publishers have heard nothing about the new work; the author's most recent book in this country is "Quick Service". . . . *John Gunther* ("Inside Europe," "Inside Asia") suggested the title for the forthcoming "I Live on Air," by *A. A. Schechter,* director of news and special events for NBC, in collaboration with *Edward Anthony.* The title represents almost the literal truth, since Mr. Schechter's duties call for a 24-hour movable schedule. . . . *John Wheeler-Bennett* ("The Forgotten Peace") is now with the British Press Service in New York. . . . *Gilbert Wright,* inventor of the Sonovox, an artificial larynx which enables a person with no vocal cords to speak, is the son of *Harold Bell Wright.* He collaborated with his famous father and has written two novels, "The Doubtful Years" and "The Lighted Lantern," under the pseudonym, "John Lebar". . . . *Eric Hatch* has sold the movie rights to his forthcoming novel, "Unexpected Uncle," to MGM, who bought it from the manuscript. It is intended as a starring vehicle for Ginger Rogers. . . . *David Loth* ("Alexander Hamilton") is at work on a biography of Woodrow Wilson. *Craig Rice* ("The Wrong Murder") spent two hours and a half recently on display in the window of Ben Abramson's bookshop in Chicago. They gave her some tea later.

EUGENE ARMFIELD.

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Authors at Christmas

THE holiday season finds most authors at home; some are still en route. Here are six of them, their Christmas headquarters stretching from England to Alaska.

Louis Bromfield is at Malabar Farm, Lucas, Ohio, where he is personally supervising the construction of a new home, only a few miles from Mansfield where he was born. The new house will be completed in time for Christmas, when the entire Bromfield family will come together for the holiday celebrations.

Vardis Fisher, in addition to spending Christmas at his home in Idaho, will celebrate the completion of the manuscript of his new book, "City of Illusion," which Harper & Brothers will publish in early spring.

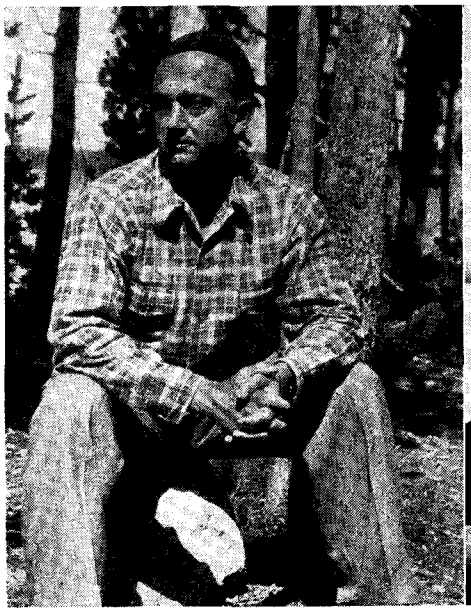
Charles Morgan, according to advices received from London, has resigned from the Admiralty, but is still in London and carrying on with his writing, "so far as the din of anti-aircraft guns will allow."

Louis Adamic is back at his farm in Milford, New Jersey, still busy on his new magazine project, *Common Ground*. He recently returned from a tour through the United States gathering material on the problems of the foreign-born. A large part of this material may be found in the recently-published "From Many Lands."

Vilhjalmur Stefansson, who is always at home in the Far North, went to Seattle recently and flew to Juneau by way of the new service which was inaugurated by Pan-American Airways last summer. He has been spending some weeks in Alaska, where he is advising Pan-Americans on far northern routes. Mr. Stefansson's new book is "Ultima Thule: Further Mysteries of the Arctic."

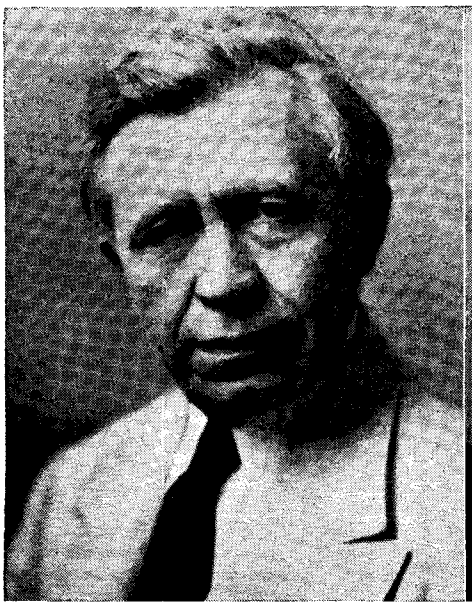
Prentiss Mournian has just been awarded a medal by the Nation Society of New England Women for "In Those Days," her account of frontier life in New York and New England, from stories handed down by early settlers. Mrs. Mournian will spend Christmas and the winter in San Diego.

Louis Bromfield



Louis Adamic

Charles Morgan



Vilhjalmur Steffansson

Prentiss Mournian

Vardis Fisher

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The Young Mr. Hendrycks

THIS IS THE SCHOOLROOM. By Nicholas Monsarrat. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1940. 409 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

THIS book falls so often into a frankly reminiscent mood that the reviewer may be excused for supposing that Marcus Hendrycks —the "I" of the novel—is simply Mr. Monsarrat in disguise. And this is rather embarrassing, for the truth is that Marcus Hendrycks is not altogether a nice young man. That would be all right, of course, if Mr. Monsarrat showed any sign of realizing it; but he doesn't. In the centre of his vision of life there is a little blind-spot, and in the centre of the blind-spot lie the faults of Marcus Hendrycks. At the beginning of the book, it is true, Marcus Hendrycks seems to regard himself with a mild but indulgent disapproval; but since, at the beginning of the book, Marcus Hendrycks is a rich young man, a Cambridge undergraduate, who plays a fairly leading part in one of the nastiest poker-stories ever to creep into fiction, some rather stronger condemnation seems to be in order. After that, Marcus Hendrycks merely pats himself on the back.

In fact, there are two Marcuses in this novel: a young Englishman who learns something about tolerance and humility and service, and a young Englishman who is just a bit of a spoiled brat. They never come together, because neither the author nor his narrator ever seem to have discovered that there are two of them; in a literary sense, "This Is the Schoolroom" is an example of split personality. And this is a pity, because the first Marcus Hendrycks is by no means an unsympathetic character. He enters the novel believing in privilege; he leaves the novel disbelieving in it. From a lothario who enjoys digging the reader in the ribs, he turns into a happy and successful lover. In the interval he has lost his money, he has been abandoned by his mistress, he has fallen into the lap of the Communist Party, he has fought in Spain, he has discarded his revolutionary faith, and he has become a kind of neo-Fourieriste, who hopes to join a coöperative community in Gloucestershire.

From this point of view, as the tale of the formative impact of the late '30s upon a disgruntled egotist, "This Is the Schoolroom" has very considerable merits. The conversations are often trite (Marcus Hendrycks does not realize that he is not a political thinker), but the incidents are vividly described, the atmosphere is always fresh and often subtle, and the movement is swift. Moreover, the first Marcus Hendrycks emerges from the novel with a belief that is unmistakably a part of contemporary history. "At the end of the war—*through* the war," he says in his penultimate paragraph, "there will emerge new ideals and new chances to implement them: there will be a brand-new stage . . . on which to enthrone reason and justice." This is not cant. It is a genuine conviction. Because this conviction exists all over England today, her eventual victory is very important to all men of goodwill.

Nicholas Monsarrat tells "one of the nastiest poker-stories ever to creep into fiction."

Christmas, 1940

By Ogden Nash

HOW many years to Bethlehem?
Near a hundred score.
Can I get there by candle light?
Not this war.

The friendly, holy candle light
Is bale fire now to death,
Its perilous glimmer long blown out
By sirens' breath.

Through skies the Wise Men humbly scanned
Three keener hunters flit—
Heinkel and Dornier seek the gleam,
With Messerschmidt.

No manger now, no cattle shed,
Too lowly to be found.
Take up the babe and hurry him
Deep underground.

But cave nor grave is deep enough
To shield young flesh and bone.
Hurry him down, and o'er his head
Roll the great stone.

What need of law to still the bells,
For how should bells be merry?
The day the child in joy was born,
The child we bury.

Gentlemen of the High Command,
Who crucify the slums,
There was an earlier Golgotha.
The third day comes.

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Hell on Earth

MY NAME IS MILLION. Anonymous. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1940. 268 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by FAY GILLIS WELLS

FOR the illumination of those of us who live in "Paradise," all questions pertaining to Hell on Earth are answered in "My Name is Million," which vividly and indelibly reveals the every day routine-of-living under modern catastrophic war conditions.

It is not the objective, factual writing of a newspaperman conscious that he is in the midst of Polish history. It is written solely from the personal, emotional viewpoint of innocent victims of aggression. "Bombed and shelled and machine-gunned out of their homes by the Western barbarians, they had dragged themselves hundreds and hundreds of miles, enduring every kind of progressive wretchedness and horror, only to fall into the hands of the barbarians from the East . . . "

When the Germans blitzkrieged Poland in September, 1939, the author, an anonymous Englishwoman obviously trained in the use of words, was living in Warsaw with her husband, a Polish officer. The author, whom I shall call "Million" for lack of a better name, claims that her haunting story of those last horrific days of Poland is no different from millions of other stories that could be told, hence the title of her timely and significant book.

On their flight from Warsaw, Million and her husband, whom she refers to as A., were run down by a lorry filled with high explosives which had swerved to avoid being hit by a bomb. Million was hit in the head by five shrapnel splinters from the bomb, driven six hours in the explosive-filled lorry to a hospital where a dresser operated on her wounds with a razor blade and a blunt pair of scissors, disinfected them with a bottle of iodine, and closed the holes with five steel stitches. Then they were shunted back and forth from one section of Poland to another, not knowing where they were going, bombed and machine-gunned so often they became bored, burned and parched by the sun in the daytime and frozen by the penetrating cold at night.

They became inured to filth, obscenities, and misery. There were moments when they envied those who were allowed to die." A wholesale massacre would have been merciful. But nobody then took the trouble to massacre them, and, "as they were alive, they had to act." As Million so pertinently points out, the oppressed have been deprived of every kind of human right "except the right to suffer, which no tyrant up to now has ever tried to take away."

But in all those months of hopeless, terror-filled wandering, it wasn't the struggle for existence they minded as much as it was Time. Time that turned the minutes into hours and the hours into Eternity—"Yesterday seemed like a hundred years ago"—so that one lost all track of Time except the unavoidable minute of the present. "Getting through Time was like trying to

swim the Dead Sea. We did the most incredible, fantastic things."

"My Name is Million" is written in two parts. The first deals with the fall of Warsaw and the escape of Million and A through the surges of lost humanity to safety at K., the Great House in Polesie. But fate had just begun to play with them. Six days after they arrived at K. the Russians started their drive westward to free the Polish peasants from such tyrants as the Mistress of K., who had rebuilt the Great House after the Bo'shevik invasion of 1920, and whom they didn't bother to kill because they didn't feel she was worth a bullet. This second part of the book is particularly dramatic reading, perhaps because it is so simply presented.

Million doesn't know why she still lives, unless she was meant to tell the story of the refugees of Poland, which is also the story of the victims of ruthless aggression all over the world today. And for the benefit of the smug who still believe "it can't happen here," Million, by the simple expedient of telling her compelling story proves that "Anything, I have found, can happen to anybody."

"My Name is Million" is absorbing required reading for everyone. It is not pleasant reading, but neither is the world pleasant today.

Fay Gillis Wells, wife of Linton Wells, is a foreign correspondent and traveler in her own right.

The Iron Voice

SUMNER TODAY: Selected Essays by William Graham Sumner, edited by Maurice R. Davie. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1940. 194 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by PALMER HARMAN

WILLIAM GRAHAM SUMNER was born with no ifs, ands, or buts in his mouth and he never acquired any. Planting himself squarely upon the "laws" which gave certainty to his universe, he translated into social theory a harsh Darwinism which, lifted out of its biological setting, was already held in suspicion by less dogmatic thinkers. The sixteen essays, addresses, and fragments included in this collection, issued to commemorate Sumner's centenary, set forth the main features of his philosophy (excluding the formal sociology) in its magnificent assertiveness. There is irony in reading, after more than thirty years, these pronouncements of a man who was sure he was right. No more audacious politico-literary plagiarism was ever committed than that by which the New Deal prostituted the meaning of "The Forgotten Man," the first essay in this book.

Yet while it is easy to smile at Sumner's dogma, nobody can smile at Sumner. His stature was greater than his systematic thought. He is still significant, in spite of his belief that monopoly should not be attacked, that protective labor laws were an evil, and that the natural way to dispose of the submerged classes (composed of the vicious and the nincompoops) was to let them starve. His belief that nothing can be given to anybody without taking an equivalent away from somebody else reveals his complete inability to grasp the difference between man in isolation and man in organized economic society.

If a social prophet waits long enough he is almost sure to be right in some of his main conclusions, regardless of how he arrived at them. This has happened to Sumner, and this is why his essays make stirring reading today. When enough damaging things have been done to organized spirit and enterprise, it becomes true that nothing can be given to anybody without taking away as much, or more, from somebody else. Liberty for the individual, the fundamental point of Sumner's system, is once more essential after the state has folded its children too long and too tightly in its sheltering arms. The "iron voice" of the Yale philosopher, calling for acceptance of the hard way and a realization of the eternal relationship of sweat to its reward,

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was needed in this year 1940 to offset the sentimental chant of the ham-and-eggers and of the choristers of the more abundant life.

Even in his theories with which time has dealt unkindly, Sumner has his disturbing contacts with contemporary thought. He saw that the modern world was headed for disaster because of its explosive mixture of stern personal liberty with feudal dependence, and his prediction of a blood-bath in the twentieth century was a stroke of intuitive genius. His errors still point to live issues. Because his "science" was precise and infallible, he had no hesitation in applying it to public policy and in prescribing what ought to be done. The economists of today, their faith completely shattered, are frantically trying to disclaim all responsibility for policy. They are inclosing themselves in an arid scholasticism which is largely concerned with regurgitating the materials of formal logic and deductive method. Sumner accepted the risk of being mistaken; many of his successors are in danger of being ignored.

The publishers of these selected essays have been conscious of their current significance and have appended comments by business men, writers, and scholars. Most of these critics are rather amusingly cautious, as though they feared that their subject would blow up in their hands. Professor William F. Ogburn makes a brief but discerning comment on the Yale sociologist's contribution to modern science, and A. G. Keller, in a reminiscent sketch, pays tribute to the modesty and the open mind which underlay the aggressive utterance. Sumner's ideas were no mere vaporings of a cock-sure doctrinaire. The "brute bulk" of the materials which he gathered would have overwhelmed a lesser man.

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. "The Ancient Mariner," by Coleridge.
2. Dr. Heidigger, in "Dr. Heidigger's Experiment," by Hawthorne.
3. Nestor, in "The Iliad," by Homer.
4. "Barbara Frietchie," by John Greenleaf Whittier.
5. Father Perrault, in "Lost Horizon," by James Hilton.
6. The Old Man of the Sea, in Sindbad's fifth voyage, from "The Arabian Nights."
7. Mr. Wemmick (The Aged P.) in "Great Expectations," by Dickens.
8. Count Dracula, in "Dracula," by Bram Stoker.
9. "She," by Rider Haggard.
10. The Struldbrugs, in "Gulliver's Travels," by Swift.

Men and Morons

WHY MEN BEHAVE LIKE APES AND VICE VERSA. By Ernest Albert Hooton. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1940. 234 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by HOMER W. SMITH

THE world chaos of today is due to the debased intelligence of the mass of "civilized" men and to nothing else. Having gained such control of natural resources that their subsistence is well nigh effortless, their biological fiber has been rotted by inertia and indolence until degenerative behavior is the rule and not the exception. The cultural causes of human atrophy are machines and public charity. A few can produce all that their fellowmen need for living, while the majority starve or subsist wretchedly on public charity, having no purchasing power. Even those who work are stultified by the effortless, thoughtless, monotonous attendance upon machines. Why should inventors attempt to build robots when machines have already made psychotic robots out of millions of human animals?

An enormous surplus of have-not, human robots gaze with hatred upon the lucky masters of machines, the manipulators of wealth and goods; and with envy upon the rotting excess of food and products which they need and cannot purchase. We do not tamper with inalienable right to reproduce their miserable kind, but we are forced by the threat of desperate revolt to do something about their vital necessities —so we resort to sweet charity—a soothing syrup which salves our consciences and dopes the economically helpless into submission.

Medicine has contributed to the production of a degenerate species, even though its ways, like the streets of hell, are so beautifully paved with good intentions. It knows enough to keep diseased and debilitated men alive, but not enough to cure them. It saves millions of lives, most of which are not worth saving because they are inferior in body and in mind. Even if society could tolerate the burden of supporting hundreds of millions of patched-up cripples and invalids who have become casualties through war and the ravages of infection, it could not withstand the economic drain which results from breeding of the constitutional inferiors, hereditarily diseased, feeble-minded, and insane. Some clauses in the oath of Hippocrates ought to be as dead as the worship of Dionysus. It is the same sentimentalists who send the flower of human stock into battle to die, and feel righteous about it, who demand that physicians save the lives of idiots.

Ernest Albert Hooton

The present war is chargeable in great part to the democracies, who did nothing about the post-Versailles economic situation other than to expand public charity, increase or establish unemployment dole, and dispense patriotic and ethical platitudes, allowing themselves to be weakened by socialistic and communistic incompetents who preached economic and personal equality and worshipped the democratic mean of worthlessness . . .

Such are a few of the opinions, briefly paraphrased, which Hooton expresses in the introduction to his book, which is aimed primarily at the vital questions, Are men necessarily intelligent because they are men? and Are all men equally intelligent? He who answers yes may be dismissed as wholly unintelligent. He who answers no, and is content to let the matter rest there, is (one presumes Hooton would say) in quite the same basket. How about senators and bankers, Irishmen and Slavs, criminals who variously prefer murder, theft, or rape, how about the Mongoloids, the Nordics, the Germans?

Hooton, who is Professor of Anthropology at Harvard, approaches his subject along the biological road: the biological relations of the primates, the psychology of the great apes, the paleontological evidences on the evolution of man, and the basis for the classification of mankind into races and various smaller groups. Then he treats the alleged differences in intelligence in primary races and secondary groups, and the supposed correlations between intelligence and social adaptability. He has himself made notable contributions in the study of the intelligence of criminals and he reviews at some length the questions of anthropometry and morality, in criminal groups as a whole as well as in those convicted for special offences.

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"Heart of the West"

BOOKS ALIVE. By Vincent Starrett. With an Informal Index by Christopher Morley. New York: Random House. 1940. 360 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER COWIE

IS it true that the dramatist Christopher Marlowe was untimely slain because he "knew too much?" Did Rostrand pilfer the plot of "Cyrano de Bergerac" from a Chicago real estate operator? Why did Coleridge enlist in the King's Light Dragoons and how well did he carry himself in the saddle? What were the thoughts of Abbé Prévost when he discovered that a "village sawbones" had performed a premature postmortem on him? If Maxim Gorky was murdered, what was the extremely ingenious method of his taking off? How much hoax was there in the books of Joan Lowell and Trader Horn? Will Mencken ever catch up with his bathtub story or live down his early verse? What can be done about it when two authors coincidentally use the same plot and then begin hissing at each other? How red were the faces of a score of eminent bibliophiles who journeyed to the village of Binche prepared to buy "unique" books from the non-existent library of the mythical Comte de Fortsas? Did the fact that Mrs. Chan Toon regularly appeared in public with a bilingual parrot on her shoulder have anything to do with expert Millard's failure to pin on her a charge of forging Oscar Wilde manuscripts? How many intelligent burghers of New York were gulled by Poe's *New York Sun* story of a three-day voyage over the Atlantic in a flying machine? How many critics accepted "the liquor of her laughter and the lacquer of her limbs" as a serious line of modern poetry in the "spoof" called "Spectra?" Should authors who have "expressed themselves . . . too early in life for later comfort" attempt to suppress their youthful mistakes? Is a plagiarist "any successful author" (in the terms of Andrew Lang), or is it better to say (with Emerson) that a writer is considered original "in proportion to the amount he stole from Plato?" Has more good literature been written in college or in jail?

These and many other provocative questions receive the attention of Vincent Starrett in "Books Alive," a volume without social significance but full of entertainment. Mr. Starrett frankly goes in for literary gossip, for he believes that it is "not wholesome to think even of our greatest writers as gods or near-gods." Accordingly he has assembled a great many literary case-histories and factual oddments of the sort that information-quiz experts would do well to warm up on. "Books Alive," however, is not written in a haphazard fashion. For a trafficker in gossip and anecdote the author is disturbingly tidy in his organization, and he is sometimes—as in the chapter on desert islands—alarmingly instructive. Mr. Starrett is that rara avis, a true amateur of letters; he should not imperil his status by wandering too far into scholar-land, where he is in the two-fold danger of being nipped by professional sharpshooters for venial offences and of losing speed and sparkle, his best assets in this volume. For although a lover of books, Mr. Starrett does not seek to distill literary essences but to report headline stories, and his book in general has a journalistic provenance. It is a grand performance. An added attraction is Christopher Morley, who sits in the front row in the dual rôle of stooge and heckler, making notes for an "unconventional index." Random House does its part by setting up a handsome page with a wide margin whereon each reader may enter the items he thinks Mr. Starrett should have included. Altogether an ideal book for a long winter's evening. James, draw the curtains and turn down the radio!

by WILLIAM SAROYAN

Illustrated by Don Freeman. Three printings before publication, $2.50

HARCOURT, BRACE & COMPANY, 383 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK

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WILL APPEASEMENT WORK FOR US?

(*Continued from page 7*)

be merely the entering wedge for political power.

As for our own country, while "the United States is a giant compared with the economy of each single European country, compared with the economy of Europe as a whole the United States is in a decidedly unfavorable position so far as both productive capacity and bargaining power are concerned. Some of our big business men who begin to see this point, so far as concerns productive power, have not yet grasped it when it comes to bargaining capacity; but if we face the whole continent of Europe united under a single economic control it will take more than a Smoot-Hawley tariff to enable us to hold our own.

> There is no such thing as "normal business" under the economy of force. Business is only a part of politics, the execution of a political plan by economic means. Even supposing that no Fifth Columnist could slip into the ranks of honest business, the individual American business man would simply be dealing with a world monopoly. His only choice would be to take it or leave it. In ninety cases out of a hundred he would have no choice but to take it on the totalitarian terms.

The only answer to that is a government monopoly of foreign trade—to which the United States will certainly be driven if we must deal with a totalitarian Europe. (And listen then for the shrieks of the appeasers who want their profits, no matter what happens to the national welfare.) Dr. Munk thinks such a monopoly would not necessarily mean internal regimentation; but the continuance of "free enterprise" internally would be possible only

> if business will coöperate with government whole-heartedly, unreservedly, and to a large extent unselfishly. For several years the business of every democratic country has been, and now is even more, confronted with the choice of immediate large profits and ultimate expropriation by the government, in name or in fact, or small profits and the continuance of the system of private enterprise. The voluntary response of business to the national emergency has in every country so far decided the fate of business.

In advance of the crisis, it would be unprofitable to speculate on what that response would be in the United States; but it is possible to make a pretty safe guess as to the side on which our appeasers of today would be found.

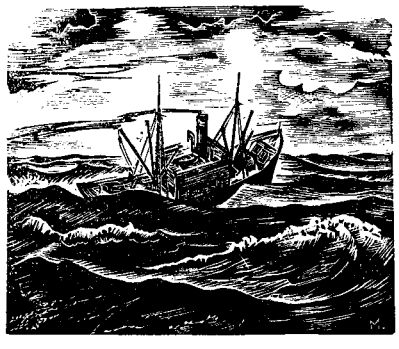
But in addition to the economy of welfare and the economy of force there is a third form, which we are feebly beginning to practise today—the economy of national defense. Dr. Munk's native land lived under such an economy for years, till it gave up its defenses at the demand of Chamberlain and Daladier to secure peace for our time; so, again, he knows what he is talking about. In many respects a defense economy resembles a force economy, but there is one decisive difference—the intention.

Civil liberties curtailed during an emergency

> are not lost, they are invested. It is like investing capital for the sake of obtaining interest; the main thing is to be able to recover the capital after the emergency has passed. The choice is between giving up some liberties now, or losing all liberties later.

All of which might be commended to the people who insist that we are certain to lose all our liberties if we become involved in war—who insist on it so gleefully that you begin to suspect they would not put up much of a fight to retain them, that they would rather lose their own liberties than be proved wrong. The present reviewer, on that point, is willing to admit that he was wrong; he believed three or four years ago that there was serious danger of loss of American liberties if we had to go to war again. But early drafts of the Industrial Mobilization Plan which encouraged that fear have been extensively modified; nor is much of that plan law as yet. No more of it could become law than Congress chose to pass, and it would be operated by an administration which, whatever its faults, has shown a genuine concern for liberty. Our experience in the Civil War, England's experience this year, has proved that the intention makes the difference; liberties curtailed in an emergency will be recovered by a nation that seriously wants to recover them.

On these current problems of defense economy, as well as on the economy of force that made them necessary, Dr. Munk's observations can be whole-heartedly recommended—and particularly to those business men who are at heart appeasers.



A Modern Ploetz

AN ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF WORLD HISTORY: a Revised and Modernized Version of Ploetz's "Epitome." Compiled and edited by William L. Langer. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1940. *pp. ix,* 1155, *lxvi.* $5.50.

Reviewed by GARRETT MATTINGLY

NONE of the many handbooks produced by the industry of German scholars has had a more useful or honorable career than Karl Ploetz's "Epitome of History." Students and teachers have not been its only consumers, for among those American families that still have room for more than half a dozen books, Ploetz, in one edition or another, runs ahead even of Bartlett, and only behind a dictionary and a Bible, as standard equipment for reference.

Naturally so useful and so often reprinted a book has undergone many changes. The first American edition did something towards correcting the Central European bias of its original, and subsequent revisions have tended not only to add modern events but to widen the earlier scope, even to making a bow to the "New History." But there has never been a revision as thorough as the present. Under the direction of Professor Langer a distinguished committee of scholars, mostly from Harvard, has completely rewritten the old text, adding so much new material and so many useful new features, maps, charts, and tables, that, though the familiar form has been retained, this may be safely said to be a new book, genuinely encyclopaedic and world wide, and comprising in its large, clearly printed double columns more historical data than has ever before been squeezed between a single pair of covers. Whether you want to verify a single date or get a rapid summary of a whole century, whether you are interested in the progress of antarctic exploration or the fate of the Austrian republic, or the rule of the Gupta dynasty, this is your book. You can almost always rely on the names and the dates, and concise little summaries will tell you what historians (or some historians) think the period or movement was all about. In particular, the last two hundred pages, devoted to the twenty-one years before September, 1939, will be invaluable to all readers of the newspapers. No edition of Ploetz has ever been quite free from boners and this one is no exception, but tested samples show a percentage of accuracy high enough to satisfy any reasonable standard, and you may safely flip the pages to settle any argument not waged between experts.

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Art Scholar's Feast

DRAWINGS IN THE FOGG MUSEUM OF ART. By Agnes Mongan, Keeper of Drawings, and Paul J. Sachs, Professor of Fine Arts, Harvard University. In 3 vols. with 404 plates. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1940. $25.

Reviewed by FRANK J. MATHER, JR.

BY increment of portraits of trustees, professors, and alumni, most colleges eventually achieve art collections of a kind. Rather few American colleges have gone far beyond this elementary and inevitable collecting. Yale over a century ago set a good example by acquiring most of the paintings and as well the miscellaneous art collections of the historical painter John Trumbull. The Harvard collection of drawings, which is first illustrated in these three fine volumes in quarto, began in 1897 with the gift of a large collection made by an alumnus, John Witt Randall. In 1928, by the will of another alumnus, Charles A. Loeser, the Fogg Museum received over a hundred drawings, some of exceptional quality. For more than a quarter of a century the co-author of this Catalogue, Professor Sachs, has been quietly feeding fine drawings into the University's solander cases, and the high spots of the collection are very largely due to his zeal and generosity.

The present catalogue represents years of careful research and is a model of its kind. To every important sheet what often runs to a little essay is devoted. Reasons are fully given for contestable attributions — in general the attributing is over- rather than under-cautious; bibliography is fully treated sheet by sheet; the indexing is as complete as possible, even watermarks not recorded in the standard works are reproduced to scale. In short the Catalogue marks a long step in the study of old-master drawings, is precisely what a student wants. Naturally it cannot be compared in esthetic and intensive interest to Mr. Berenson's "Drawings by the Florentine Painters," but its very discursiveness gives the Mongan-Sachs Catalogue a usefulness all its own. Almost all periods and schools of European draughtsmanship are represented — the English and American Schools being reserved for future volumes. In turning over the catalogue and plates the active collector of drawings will be sure to get new light on his own "puzzle box." Indeed since Berenson deals mostly with what is now as inaccessible as the *nebulae* to a modern collector, while Mongan-Sachs deals to a considerable extent with what is in the modern collector's daily stride, it is really more necessary for such a collector to own this new catalogue than it is for him to own Berenson's.

The three volumes substantially bound in buckram are a creditable example of the book making of the Harvard University Press. The *catalogue raisonné* occupies the first volume; volumes II and III offer 404 collotype plates of good quality, the large size of the page permitting most of the drawings to be reproduced to scale. Well over half of the 775 sheets catalogued are reproduced. The editors have wisely refrained from trying to facsimile drawings in several colors. The monochrome reproductions are sufficient for study.

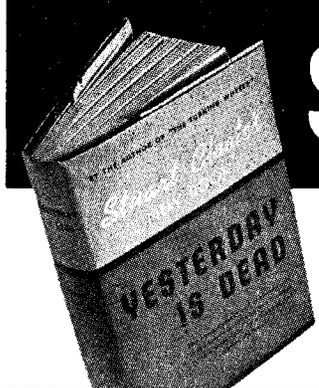
Obviously this work is addressed to scholars. However, it is interestingly written, and the intelligent amateur should find small difficulty in coping with it. For collectors, print-rooms, and art-reference libraries it is indispensable.

"This book is an explosion and it hurls ideas!"
—N.Y. TIMES BOOK REVIEW

YESTERDAY IS DEAD

by the Author of THE TURNING WHEELS AND WATCH FOR THE DAWN

Stuart Cloete



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What this book is:

YESTERDAY IS DEAD was written for those who are "bewildered by antagonistic voices and contradictory facts" in a world at war again. Passionately, logically, and clearly this famous novelist states the dilemmas of the average man or woman. It is a 1940 *Common Sense.*

SMITH AND DURRELL, Inc.,
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(*Continued from page 4*)

of literary and intellectual pretensions.

In reality they hated the South a good deal less than they said and thought. Rather, so far as their hatred was not mere vain profession designed to invite attention to their own superior perception, they hated it with the exasperated hate of a lover who cannot persuade the object of his affections to his desire. Or, perhaps more accurately, as Narcissus, growing at length analytical, might have suddenly begun to hate his image reflected in the pool.

All these men remained fundamentally Southern in their basic emotions. Intense belief in and love for the Southern legend had been bred into them as children and could not be bred out again simply by taking thought; lay ineradicably at the bottom of their minds, to set up conflict with their new habit of analysis and their new perceptions. And their hate and anger against the South was both a defense mechanism against the inner uneasiness created by that conflict and a sort of reverse embodiment of the old sentimentality itself. Thomas Wolfe almost explicitly makes Eugene Gant recognize as much.

The continuing power of the Southern heritage upon them is curious to observe. Wolfe's rhetoric, far more obviously than Cabell's, is directly descended from the old Southern line.

But that will scarcely do for Faulkner and Caldwell? These, as everyone knows, had been to school to the Middle Westerners and the Russians and to Joyce.

They had, certainly. And yet it seems to me that when you drain off the extraneous elements, the long flowing grace of Faulkner's best sentences, his loving choice of highly colored words, often plainly stuck in merely for their own sake, is—personal, yes, but also distinctly Southern. And perhaps it is not best to be too sure even about the carefully-stripped style of Erskine Caldwell.

When we turn from the manner of their writing to the question of its content, the matter is clearer. Growing steadily more realistic; in the case of the Caldwells and the Faulkners, sternly rooting out not only sentimentality but even sentiment, so far as it was possible, emotion of any sort, these new Southern authors remained in some curious fashion *romantics* in their choice of materials—shall we say, romantics of the appalling. Or am I mistaken in thinking that the essence of romanticism is the disposition to deal in the more-than-life-sized, the large and heroic, the picturesque and vivid and extravagant? But however much the new Southern authors might differ in their approach to their material, and regardless of what faults they might still display, nearly all of them had decisively escaped from the old Southern urge to turn the country into Never-Never Land, that nearly all of them stood, intellectually at least, pretty decisively outside the legend; and so were able to contribute to the region its first literature of any bulk and importance. And at the same time, in one measure or another, to cast light on the Southern social scene and direct attention to Southern social problems. The very concentration of the hate-and-horror school upon their chosen materials served the latter purpose admirably, regardless of their own intentions.

To which I should add that, as time passed, the hate reaction and its loud profession in some quarters tended to dwindle. It is not often to be observed in books published in the last two or three years. The calm, good-humored criticism of Jonathan Daniels's "A Southerner Discovers the South" and of the *North Georgia Review*, an able little quarterly published at Clayton, Georgia, by Lillian Smith and Paula Snelling, is now becoming generally characteristic.

The proposition that Southern writers of any importance were generally moving toward a more clear-eyed view of the Southern world even has a certain applicability to a group which might seem to stand wholly outside what I have been saying. I refer to the so-called Southern Agrarians, who made their appearance in the late twenties, with the center of their activity at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, and who were led by John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, and Donald Davidson.

Primarily this group was one which turned its gaze sentimentally backward. Its appearance just as the South was moving toward the crisis of the depression, just as Progress was apparently sweeping the field, just as the new critics and writers were beginning to swing lustily against the old legend and the old pattern, was significant. In a real fashion these men were mouthpieces of the fundamental, if sometimes only subterranean, will of the South to hold to the old way: the spiritual heirs of Thomas Nelson Page. And their first joint declaration "I'll Take My Stand," was, like their earlier prose works in general, essentially a determined reassertion of the validity of the legend of the Old South, an attempt to revive and fully restore the identification of that Old South with Cloud-Cuckoo Town, or at any rate to render it as a Theocritean idyl.

BUT the attempt was made with enormously intellectual arguments, which itself is evidence of how far the South had moved on its highest levels, how far the new spirit had invaded even conservative quarters like Vanderbilt. The yearning of these men toward the past had encountered and mingled with all that yearning for the past which, in Europe and America, has moved in an unbroken stream since the early-nineteenth-century revolt against Rousseau. They had read the "Summa Theologica" of St. Thomas Aquinas, were steeped in Spinoza, Hobbes, Kant, all the philosophers; they worshipped at the shrine of Dr. John Donne (the Donne of St. Paul's deanery and the esoteric poems rather than the author of "To His Mistress Going to Bed," of course); they had been influenced in varying degree by De Maistre, John Ruskin, Ferdinand Brunetière, the neo-Catholicism of Hilaire Belloc and Gilbert Chesterton, the neo-medievalism of Belloc and Chesterton and T. S. Eliot, by Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer Moore and Norman Foerster.

They distrusted science almost as warmly as Bishop Wilberforce had once distrusted it, felt with conviction that it assumed much too arrogantly to be on the verge of illuminating the whole of the vast range of illimitable darkness which is the mysterious universe, that its total effect on men was to make them too smug and knowing and brightly hard, to loose the old bonds without replacing them with new ones or having the capacity to replace them with new ones—perhaps not altogether without reason. They distrusted industrialism and its effect on mankind and the South even more positively, and certainly not without reason. They had more than a few doubts about democracy. Arrant individualists, they yet recoiled from the monadism which, swing-

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ing up through the centuries from the Renaissance, was flowering in the chaos of our times; felt the pressing need for the revival of values, and above everything a religious faith, which should again bind Western men, or at least some portion of them, into a unified whole.

Being poets (the old Fugitive group formed the core of the Agrarian group), they longed for a happy land into which to project their hearts' desire. Being Southerners, and so subject, subconsciously at any rate, to the old powerful drive toward idealization of the fatherland, they caught up all their wishing and all their will to think themselves back into the old certainties and projected them upon the Old South as the Arcadia in which they had once been realized, and to which return would have to be made if salvation were to be achieved.

It is not true, as was foolishly charged by the Communists and others who should have known better, that they consciously inclined to Fascism. And it is not true, as Sherwood Anderson and an army of followers clamored, that all that moved them was simply the nostalgic wish to sit on cool and columned verandas, sip mint juleps, and converse exquisitely while the poor-whites and the black men toiled for them in the hot, wide fields spread out against the horizon.

It is true that Allen Tate got into near-Fascist company as one of the editors of the *American Review,* though that was the result of sympathies which had nothing directly to do with Fascism. I think he was quite candid when he protested to the *Nation* that he would join the Communists if the only alternative were the Silver Shirts.

It is true also that the majority of the contributors to "I'll Take My Stand" were primarily occupied with the aristocratic notion in their examination of the Old South. And it is true, finally, that they took little account of the case of the underdog proper, the tenants and sharecroppers, industrial labor, and the Negroes as a group.

Nevertheless, they did take much interest in the small landowning farmers—the yeomen. A minority of them, with John Donald Wade of Georgia University as the most eminent, was even more concerned with these people than with the planters. And practically every contributor to the book confessed openly or tacitly that the Old South was in the main more simple, plain, and recognizably human in a new country than the legend had ever had it in the past. Furthermore, it may be said that the virtues they assigned to the Old South were essentially the virtues which it indubitably possessed. Save for the fact that they insisted on making it a good bit more contemplative and deeply wise than I think it was, they are much the same virtues I have myself assigned to it at its best: honor, courage, generosity, amiability, courtesy.

Merely, the Agrarians refused to observe the faults of the Old South and the operation of its system upon the people who lived under it. And, above all, to confess that the diseases which presently afflict the South are not and cannot logically be made to be, as they maintain, solely the fault of the introduction of industrialism and commercialism, but in very great part flow directly out of the pattern laid down in the Old South itself.

As time has gone on, however, they have tended to modify their views in the direction of realism. The tendency to idealize the Old South has gone steadily on, indeed. It is to be observed plainly in such books as Allen Tate's "The Fathers" and Caroline Gordon's "None Shall Look Back." And above all in Stark Young's "So Red the Rose." It is more than a little ironic that the last novel was written by a man who prefers to live in New York (an Agrarian by remote control, as it were) and who serves the *New Republic* as drama critic. But the case serves brilliantly to illustrate the power of the South over its sons even when they flee from it, and is perhaps explicable enough on the theory that distance tends to heighten and not lessen romantic nostalgia.

But despite the persistence of this tendency to idealize, the movement toward realism which I mention has gone forward, too. Taxed by most of the critics with having no knowledge of the elements of sociology and economics, at which they were inclined to sneer in "I'll Take My Stand" and their early essays in the *American Review,* the Agrarians were not long in setting out to remedy the lack, and they have gradually exhibited more respect for the facts in these fields. Moreover, they have gathered many new converts, some of whom are well versed in the social sciences and have no patience with precious nonsense about them—converts of whom the most notable is Herbert Agar of the Louisville *Courier-Journal.*

William Faulkner denies he has any interest in anything but the individual.

Again, when the critics pointed out their lack of awareness of the underdog in "I'll Take My Stand" and charged that Agrarianism was only a nebulous piece of poetizing about the joys of communion with the soil, without definite form or objective, they tacitly admitted the justice of the indictment by expanding their doctrine into a "program." Ever since they have spent a great deal of ink in deploring the growth of tenantry, sharecropping, absentee landlordism, and industrial proletarianism; have continually maintained that the South could never be healthy again until the land was widely distributed among small holders. In the hands of such men as Mr. Agar, the argument here has become very extensive and formidable. But it cannot be said that their "program" is yet properly such, for they have never got around to telling us precisely how the redistribution of the land is to be brought about —though that is not to be too much held against them, since the problem is one of staggering difficulties.

These Agrarians have had the bad influence of encouraging smugness and sentimentality in many quarters, and even of giving these vices sanction as a sort of higher wisdom. But it is fair to say that this has probably been well balanced out by their services in puncturing the smugness of Progress, in directing attention to the evils of laissez-faire industrialism, in their insistence on the necessity of developing a sensible farm program for the region, and in recalling that the South must not be too much weaned away from its ancient leisureliness.

The foregoing article, in somewhat telescoped form, is part of W. J. Cash's "The Mind of the South," shortly to be published by Alfred A. Knopf.

WAITE BOOKS

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Benjamin Franklin Waite, Publisher, Johnson City, N. Y.

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THE NEW BOOKS

Fiction

WINE ON THE DESERT. By Max Brand. Dodd, Mead. 1940. 271 *pp.* $2.50.

The constant movie-goer will best understand the figures who populate Max Brand's short stories, for he has seen such as these in nightly incarnation, flat, two-dimensioned, and thirty feet high. They are not people but protypes, shrewd conglomerates made up of chosen details, angles, highlights, gestures, tag-lines. They move, they breathe, they speak, ladies and gentlemen, as lifelike as any of you and probably more so. For the interne, to take one example, who can't take money in one of these tales (it's that young Dr. Kildare), is not just an interne; he's The Interne, all the internes ever seen or heard of or written about, rolled into one master mold. So also the western desperado, the race-track tout, the newspaper man, the sentimental Jewish storekeeper, the cowardly second lieutenant. And Mr. Brand can lay his hands on all the verbal props as magically as any director. If it's Irish talk you want, there it is with the smell of peat in it. Or the hard lingo of Madison Square Garden, or good horse-fanciers' talk, or the clipped desperation of an unhappy philanderer. Of course, action is the keynote everywhere. Each tale has whole lives of crisis telescoped into the few telling moments toward which it has been moving with undeviating force. It is possible to read any one story and admire its neat, tight structure, the most that is accomplished in the least space. But to read through "Wine on the Desert" is to see the impulsions toward melodrama which underline every word in it.

N. L. R.

MR. AND MRS. MEIGS. By Elizabeth Corbett. Appleton-Century. 1940. 278 *pp.* $2.

You can never guess what age Caroline Eaton Meighs may be when she appears in a new book. She appeared first in "Young Mrs. Meigs" and was then a hearty and lively character of eighty. Later a mild flirtation in "Mrs. Meigs and Mr. Cunningham" caught her at eighty-two. In both these gay volumes Carrie Meigs was a widow and it was in one of them that she said "I may have one foot in the grave but so long as I am able I hope to keep the other foot under the card table." It was then something of a shock to find her only in her teens in "She Was Carrie Eaton" with Richard Meigs, who had always been so quietly dead until then, a dashing young man busy with his Victorian wooing.

And now we have Carrie and Richard as "Mr. and Mrs. Meigs" when they have been married just ten years, with their young children about them, and all kinds of young-married problems on their hands. As always with Mrs. Meigs in the picture there is courage and honor abounding and events come helter-skelter out of the blue to keep the story as active as the characters. The things that happen to the Meigs's are not unusual. They are the things that happen to most youngish couples with children and relatives and in-laws but with Carrie to cope with them they take on very different patterns.

"Mr. and Mrs. Meigs" is meant for entertainment and Elizabeth Corbett knows the exact measurements for wit and sympathy, for tragedy and comedy to produce a novel for pleasant evening escape from radio and newspaper. If you are determined to find social significance in fiction you may ponder on the meaning of Mrs. Meigs's obvious delight in getting away from on whatever pretext she can produce—but then if you are determined to find social significance in what you read you probably won't be reading about the adventures of Carrie Meigs at all.

G. G.

International

BEYOND GERMAN VICTORY. By Helen Hill and Herbert Agar. Reynal & Hitchcock. 1940. 117 *pp.* $1.

"The world beyond German victory is a world whose blueprints are ready, including the blueprints for Hitler's United States." Starting with the premise that the battle of Britain may end in a Hitler victory the two authors make a resolute attack on what is America's weightiest problem today. They cite pure and simple facts. Their words are clear and decisive. Their hearts beat warmly and their conviction is immovable. And so this little book becomes something of a "Guide for Non-Isolationists."

It warns of over-optimism. "We are being fooled and we are fooling ourselves." And, to show what a German victory would mean for America, it devotes one chapter to the "Nazi design for living." It proves in a few, well-chosen, irrefutable statements of fact how Nazi success means "lights out" in Europe and, sequentially what America is in danger of losing. It would become an economic, spiritual, and physical island, since victory in the current battle of Britain means control of the North Atlantic. Therefore the authors say: "We the people of the United States have to make some quick choices. If we chose now we can act on our own choice." And we dare not chose appeasement. Three courses are open to us: to capitulate,

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
CASE OF THE VIOLET SMOKE *John Donavan* (Mystery House: $2.)	'Orrible vi'let cloud scares London loungers and leads Scotland Yarders to corpse of murdered chemist.	Smoothly written and logically worked out example of English mystery tale—with distressing lack of action and almost unbelievable motive.	Grade C
MALICE DOMESTIC *Evelyn Cameron* (Crime Club: $2.)	Plunge over Texas mesa kills one woman; artfully administered poison eliminates her arrogant sister. Sheriff Jake Thompson accounts for both killings.	Canny south-western law officer sifts jumble of motives, and comes up with killer who almost turns tables on captor.	Good
THE CORPSE AT THE QUILL CLUB *Amelia Reynolds Long* (Phoenix: $2.)	Overdose of drug kills poisonous-minded woman guest at Penna. literary gathering. Nice girl helps sleuth Trelawney solve it.	Has some rather kittenish moments, but plot is well put together, and characters are entertainingly, if exaggeratedly, developed.	Average
THE DEPARTMENT OF QUEER COMPLAINTS *Carter Dickson* (Morrow: $2.)	Good short stories by Anglo-American master of mystification. English settings for all but one of them.	Puzzle pieces that will stump the six best guessers—with solutions that are ridiculously simple.	Satisfactory
THE SAINT IN MIAMI *Leslie Charteris* (Crime Club: $2.)	Simon Templar and Co. match wits and physical prowess with bloodthirsty international mob infesting Florida coast.	Hoppy Uniatz, Peter Quentin and Patricia Holm excellent supporting cast for resourceful Saint in exciting yarn.	Triple-X thriller

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to meet Germany repeatedly on ground of her own choosing, or to adopt the offensive both in overall policy and in military strategy.

Any thoughtful American whether he completely agrees with the authors or not, must lay down this book with a sense of satisfaction. For here is a compressed yet completely thorough statement of everything the advocates of an aggressive, dynamic foreign policy for America have on their minds and hearts.

H. B. K.

Science

THE GOLDEN THRONG. By Edwin Way Teale. Dodd, Mead. 1940. 208 *pp.* $3.

The author of "Grassroot Jungles" has rung another bell. "Grassroot Jungles" dealt with the lives of our common backyard insects. "The Golden Throng" treats only of the queen of insects, the honey bee. Entomologists put the bee last in their systematics, because it is the high peak of insect evolution. As a single species culminates the vertebrate line—man himself—so the honey bee has no rivals in its marvelous development, or in the perfection of its social organization. How that evolution came about, from the solitary bees to the semi-social sorts, until it attains to *Apis mellifera,* Mr. Teale tells right at the start. From that point on he is absorbed in his sociology of the hive.

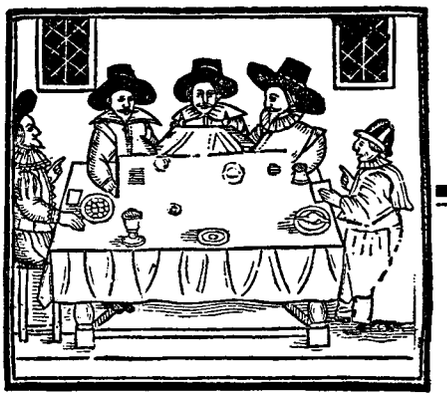
Huber, the blind naturalist and Maeterlinck, to mention but two great writers, have sought to exhaust the story of the hive. But it is inexhaustible, whether in the new facts to be discovered about it, or in the fresh enthusiasm awakened in every generation for these marvelous little animals. Mr. Teale has his own observation hive, so that he writes out of a fund of first hand knowledge. He writes with a lucidity and simplicity that are models of the popularization of Nature. And he scatters his photographs with a lavish hand; he is a master photographer of the minuscule in close-up, as well as a most admirably reliable purveyor of scientific facts.

Hive bees are represented in cave drawings of the Stone Age; the bee has accompanied civilization to the ends of the earth, though its own civ-

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 352)

GEORGE ELIOT
MILL ON THE FLOSS

But milk and mildness are not the best things for keeping. I have often wondered whether those early Madonnas of Raphael . . . kept their placidity undisturbed when their strong-limbed boys got a little too old to do without clothing.



Are YOU *in the Picture?*

IN 1764, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, recognizing that men of talent in the London of that time had one *great common interest* . . . LITERATURE . . . conceived the idea of and founded the famous LITERARY CLUB. *Dr. Johnson, Edmund Burke, Mr. Fox, Mr. Garrick, Sir John Hawkins, Oliver Goldsmith*, and *Mr. Sheridan* were perhaps the most prominent of the original members of the brilliant circle which soon made its *literary opinion* felt throughout the kingdom. Life was one continual round, as *Boswell* says, of "Breaking fast at General Paoli's, drinking tea at Mrs. Williams's, supping and dining at TURKS HEAD, THE MITRE and THE CROWN & ANCHOR." As soon as *new books* or *literary tendencies* came into being, they were immediately *discussed*, and the resulting *opinion of this group* soon influenced the taste of the entire *reading public* of that day.

IN 1941 *New York* may claim to be the *literary center of America*, but the *people* who are interested in books, who read and discuss *contemporary literature*, are living in cities, towns and country places scattered over the greater part of a continent. However, *30,000* of them *get together* at least once every week for the same fundamental reason that *Dr. Johnson's* friends gathered at THE MITRE. They want to learn the latest news, gossip, tendencies, opinions, likes and dislikes of the *leaders in our literary life*. They, in turn, *influence* their own circles of intimate friends.

THE CURRENT ISSUE of the *Saturday Review of Literature* is the chief topic for discussion at *this week's meeting* of the 30,000; and we are *delighted* to have the pleasure of *your* company. If you are not a *regular* member, if you are not *in the picture*, you can be sure there is a *vacant place* waiting and *congenial friends* anxious to *welcome you* to their midst. . . . Just let us know *your intentions*, fill out the address card below, and send it to us with your check for the *annual dues* ($4.00).

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STREET .....

CITY AND STATE .....

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ilization is millions of years older than ours. No wonder if the literature on the honey bee is the longest devoted to any one insect on the rostrum of 700,000 species of insects! D. C. P.

LOOK AT LIFE! By Lynwood M. Chace. Knopf. 1940. $3.50.

Mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects, and spiders are the subjects of this collection of photographs designed to open our eyes to "what we are missing." Mr. Chace is a portraitist who plans his effects and seldom shoots from the hip. Much of his work is in itself excellent. The photographs of insects, taken with a magnifying lens, give glimpses of a world that will stand comparison with anything that has been imagined about life on the planet Mars, and in particular the tigerish giant water beetle should haunt the dreams of anyone who looks at these representations. Among the higher animals, the accent is generally on the human appeal. The studies of the family of raccoons and of the young foxes should prove especially engaging, while the photograph of the chimney swifts captures the personality of that bird as it has never perhaps been caught before by the camera. But the book as a whole, like so many popularizations of natural history, suffers from not knowing really what it is driving at. It looks at life with too random an eye, like the museum of a generation ago. The pictures have been compiled without any count having been taken of what has been done often enough before, while scant use has been made of the technique, employed so successfully by *Natural History Magazine,* of presenting a life-history or one of the crucial dramas of the lower forms of life in a series of photographs that tell the story in themselves.

C. O., Jr.

Miscellaneous

PARENTS CAN LEARN. By Helen Ellwanger Hanford, with a forward by Calara Savage Littledale. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1940. 263 *pp.* $1.75.

Here's your chance to take stock of yourself as a parent. If you're a parent-to-be or perhaps the proud parent of a newly-arrived "first baby," you will find a very practical discussion of how to tackle the many problems that lie ahead. Common sense is the keynote of this book as opposed to bookish child psychology. The author, herself the mother of four, in a charming and witty style, and with the use of many anecdotes, considers the many problems that are usually faced in the management of a family: the adjustment of new parents to their new mode of living, nursery schools, summer vacations, family cooperation, the child's health, his aptitude, and of course that most ticklish of all problems—adolesence.

S. C.

TRADE WINDS

P. E. G. QUERCUS ASSOCIATES

THE year ends with the death of F. Scott Fitzgerald. It is hard to believe that it is a generation since the dashing Fitzgerald came out of Princeton with tales that labeled an era. Harding was president during this Jazz Age: girls were wearing knee-length skirts, men bell-bottom trousers; the most-discussed beverage was bath-tub gin. We liked Fitzgerald's books and we liked his reporting. Social historians, in resurrecting the 1920's, will find much truth and accuracy in his earlier novels and short stories of college days, jazz, booze, clothes and prohibition. F. Scott Fitzgerald was in his early forties when he died.

★ ★

☞The Gotham Book Mart is sponsoring "Poets' Messages," a series of inexpensive pamphlets devoted to new works by internationally-known poets, many of them writers-in-exile. Among the nations represented are Ireland (James Joyce), England (W. H. Auden), America (William Carlos Williams and Eugene Jolas), Germany (Franz Werfel), France (Jules Supervielle and Ivan Goll), Belgium (Robert Goffin), Russia (Boris Pasternak), Spain (Manolo Altolaguirre) and Chile (Pablo Neruda). Each booklet will be illustrated by an artist "spiritually related to the poet," and will appear either in the original language or in translation during coming months. The first of the series, "Chansons de France," by Ivan Goll, illustrated by Fernand Leger, is just off the press.

★ ★

☞We find it interesting to note what public library subscribers read and what the bookstore customer reads or buys. The most popular non-fiction book in the New York Public Library today is *From Many Lands* by Louis Adamic, while among the leading bookstores in the country this title ranks No. 10. ☞In the fiction field *Oliver Wiswell* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* run neck and neck in bookstores and libraries. ☞From Wynn and Horn, booksellers, we learn that they have recently opened the "only exclusive" bookstore in Peekskill. Writes Mr. Horn: "Peekskill is a city of about twenty thousand and we're anxious to see if a community of this size can support a real bookshop—that is, a shop that sells nothing but books." We think it can although we know of scores of cities of this size that haven't the facilities of a good library, let alone a bookstore. By the way, the address of this "only exclusive" is 936 Central Ave. (Advt.)

★ ★

☞From Lippincott comes word that Mrs. J. Borden Harriman, United States Minister to Norway, has turned in her manuscript for a book to be called *Mission to the North,* which tells of her experiences in that country leading up to the German invasion. The book is due in the Spring. ☞Speaking of Norway, C. J. Hambro's *I Saw It Happen in Norway* is in its seventh printing. ☞N. C. Wyeth is doing the illustrations for the new one-volume edition of *The Bounty Trilogy.* ☞Remember the "Humanist School"? There's a new book that's coming out in January by Frederick Manchester: *Irving Babbitt.* Mr. Babbitt, together with Paul Elmer More, was one of the most exciting exponents of a type of thinking that raged so ponderously in the early thirties. Forester, Eliot (T. S.), Munson, Collins, and a few others dominated the learned journals in those days.

★ ★

☞Arthur Rushmore of Harper & Brothers likes good verse; this Christmas, his greeting card expresses both

Conversation group: Franz Werfel, Jules Romains, Maurice Maeterlinck, and Lion Feuchtwanger at a recent cocktail party given by M. Romains in his penthouse apartment atop the Mayflower Hotel in New York.

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his sentiments and that of Walt Whitman. From old Walt he prints:

Keep heart O comrade;

God may be delayed
By evil, but he suffers no defeat.

God is not foiled;

The drift of the World Will

Is stronger than all wrong.

★ ★

☞We're going out tomorrow, which is the last day before Christmas, and buy ourselves a Christmas gift. It's going to be a book—*The Record Book* by David Hall. Off-hand we can't think of a more practical guide to good phonograph records than this recent publication. What with more than six thousand titles and suggestions we're headed for some pleasant evenings these Winter months.

★ ★

☞Two books of interest for those who cherish their civil liberties are *A Liberal in Wartime: The Education of Albert DeSilver,* by Walter Nelles, and *The Censor Marches On,* by Messrs. Ernst and Lindey . . . Mr. A. van Duym, window designer for the Scribner Book Store, has been awarded first prize in the national window display contest for *Oliver Wiswell.* Mr. van Duym is a prize-winner from 'way back . . . Second prize went to Brentano's of White Plains, N. Y. Patti Brisbane and Clifford Carpenter did the decorating. ☞Best sellers in the reprint field are *Kitty Foyle* by Christopher Morley, and *Escape* by Ethel Vance. In the non-fiction the leaders are *Mein Kampf* and *The Golden Bough.*

★ ★

☞An *SRL* editor, en route from Missouri, landed in Chicago on a Sunday sans sufficient cash for a lower berth to New York. The banks and the bookstores—where he ordinarily would have attempted to cash a check—were closed. Our editor tried to persuade the clerk at the railroad ticket window to accept a check for the fare. The clerk, at first adamant, finally consented to examine his identification papers and credentials. A copy of the *SRL* was produced and the name of the editor pointed out on the editorial page masthead; then a sheaf of newspaper clippings growing out of the editor's lecture tour; then automobile registration, and finally a bankbook. The clerk went through all these papers with more than passing interest. "Well," asked the editor with a little bit of triumph in his voice, "are these good enough?" "Sorry, mister," the clerk said. "That's the trouble; they're too good! . . ."

★ ★

☞One of our scouts reports a Christmas find in two charming "King" Penguin Books (41 East 28th Street): *A Book of Roses,* with color plates from Redouté's *Roses;* and *British Birds,* with reproductions of John Gould color engravings. Priced at fifty cents, they are charming examples of good taste in inexpensive book production.

Double-Crostics: No. 353

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

1-F	■	2-K	3-I	4-T	■	5-W	6-Y	7-Q	8-A	9-N	■	10-X	11-B	■	12-O	13-G
■	14-Y	15-K	16-C	17-G	18-Q	19-V	■	20-Q	21-L	22-D	23-I	■	24-Y	25-A	26-E	27-I
28-P	29-X	30-S	31-H	32-L	33-F	34-W	■	35-J	■	36-C	37-O	38-U	■	39-U	40-H	41-K
42-A	43-O	■	44-X	45-H	46-R	47-P	■	48-B	49-N	50-J	■	51-E	52-M	53-I	54-L	■
55-V	56-L	57-N	■	58-U	59-R	60-Y	■	61-F	62-S	63-P	■	64-C	65-F	66-D	67-L	■
68-Y	69-W	70-N	71-O	72-S	■	73-Y	74-H	75-X	76-C	77-U	78-T	79-A	80-V	81-L	■	82-T
83-O	■	84-T	85-B	86-J	87-M	■	88-M	■	89-P	90-L	91-S	■	92-Y	93-C	94-P	95-O
96-M	■	97-E	98-T	99-A	100-R	101-W	■	102-J	■	103-H	104-I	105-O	106-R	107-G	108-P	■
109-O	110-K	111-N	■	112-Q	113-M	114-G	■	115-I	116-N	117-F	118-L	■	119-K	120-N	121-D	122-J
■	123-M	124-B	■	125-M	126-D	■	127-C	128-L	129-H	130-O	131-B	■	132-T	133-W	134-E	135-Q
136-P	137-S	■	138-U	139-R	140-F	141-Q	142-O	■	143-V	144-H	145-T	146-N	147-E	148-R	149-G	150-X
■	151-N	152-V	153-D	154-G	155-M	■	156-K	157-N	158-D	159-P	160-E	161-T	■	162-F	163-B	164-D
■	165-Y	166-E	167-A	168-C	169-M	170-H	171-U	172-Q	173-G	174-T	■	175-P	176-C	177-A	178-Q	179-J

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 21 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Shaky, tottering.

B. Wife of Joseph, mother of Manasseh.

C. Solid wall-like defenses.

D. Denoting deadening of tones (Music; Fr.)

E. Last Plantagenet king.

F. Pertaining to comedy; comic.

G. Soldier home on leave (England).

H. Taking intense delight (in).

I. Community of Perfectionists (est. in N. Y. State 1847-8).

J. African weaver bird *(Viduinae).*

K. Rich retired Anglo-Indians.

L. Place near the hearth.

M. Strong and good (of ale, etc.)

N. Only ship of Drake's to circumnavigate the globe.

O. Change of place, condition, etc.

P. Mt. Range in Antarctic east of Maria Byrd range.

Q. Causing vexation or irritation.

R. Heroine of opera "Der Freischütz," (C. M. von Weber).

S. Athena of Lower Egypt (relig.)

T. Castles in the air.

U. Bleached.

V. Greek letter.

W. Inclined to take offense (slang).

X. One in Longfellow's "Children's Hour."

Y. Present time (adv. or subs.)

WORDS

A.	42	177	25	79	99	8	167		
B.	85	11	131	48	124	163			
C.	127	36	93	64	176	76	16	168	
D.	164	121	126	153	158	22	66		
E.	134	147	26	51	166	160	97		
F.	162	65	61	33	1	140	117		
G.	154	107	17	173	149	114	13		
H.	170	40	74	45	103	144	31	129	
I.	27	53	23	104	115	3			
J.	86	122	35	50	102	179			
K.	110	15	119	41	156	2			
L.	21	67	32	56	118	81	90	54	128
M.	87	88	96	169	123	125	52	155	113
N.	70	116	57	111	157	49	9	120	146	151
O.	12	83	105	109	43	71	95	142	130	37
P.	94	47	136	108	89	175	159	28	63	
Q.	172	135	141	178	20	7	18	112		
R.	59	148	46	106	139	100				
S.	62	91	30	72	137					
T.	84	132	4	145	98	161	78	82	174	
U.	138	39	171	77	38	58				
V.	152	143	80	19	55					
W.	101	69	5	133	34					
X.	75	29	10	150	44					
Y.	68	73	14	24	165	6	60	92		

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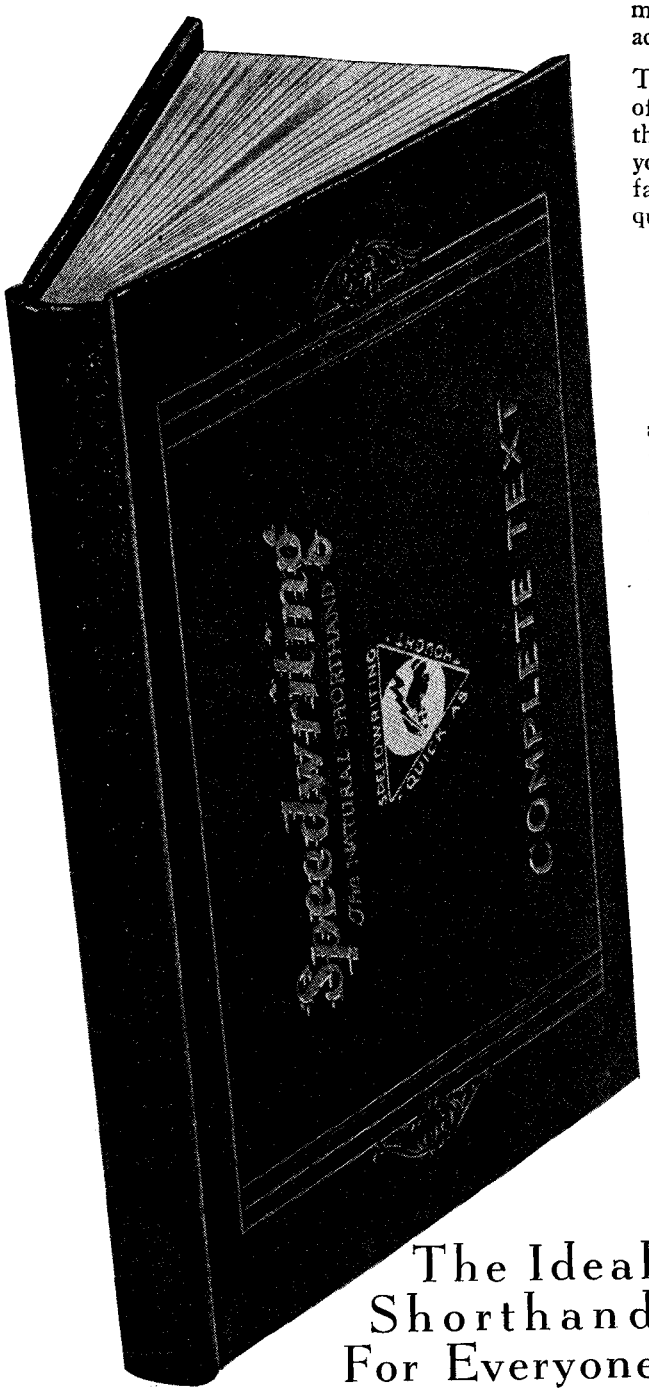

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